Peer Coaching Plan

Reflection of a Peer Coaching/Mentorship Experience with a New Middle School Teacher

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Academic Focus

District Mentorship Program

The district has established the following goals for the mentorship of a new teacher.

- ❏ "Just In Time" support at the building level
  - ❏ For example: conference ideas, brainstorming how to handle a challenging student/parent/colleague relationship, classroom management ideas, grading, writing assessments, data collection & analysis, work & life balance
- ❏ Curriculum work
  - ❏ Lesson planning and pacing, instructional methods, identifying learning targets, book study
- ❏ Ideas/support for evaluation
  - ❏ Choosing a good lesson, pre and post observation preparation
  - ❏ Connections to the [Danielson's Framework for Teaching (2011) Rubrics by Washington State](#)

Administrator

My principal identified the following goals for my mentorship of our new teacher.

- ❏ Support in accessing the content
- ❏ Guidance on classroom management techniques
- ❏ Support in earning a Proficient rating on the TPEP (Teacher/Principal Evaluation Program) using the [Danielson's Framework for Teaching (2011) Rubrics by Washington State](#)

Coaching Team

My mentee and I sat down to identify some areas of focus that she would like to work on together.

- ❏ Content expertise
- ❏ Tier 3 Integration according to the [WA State Tiers of Technology Integration into the Classroom Indicators](#)

She also identified the following areas of focus independently and sent them to me.

- ❏ Writer's Workshop (how to conference, how to differentiate within this workshop model, how to have students help each other)
- ❏ Reader's Workshop for second tri- students are moving at extremely different paces this tri and it is making it more complicated for their lit circles
- ❏ Finding supplemental sources for SS—moving beyond the textbook a little bit
- ❏ Incorporating grammar lessons, poetry, other smaller units throughout LA without it seeming random

Structure

I will be using my mentorship of a new teacher to fulfill my coaching relationship. While she is a 7th grade language arts teacher like me, she also teaches 7th grade social studies. This year I am teaching only advanced sections of language arts. However, not only did I teach the same 7th grade social studies curriculum the past

two years, but I have also taught the general education sections in the past.

Coach Roles and Responsibilities

I see my role as a coach including the following actions.
- ❏ Collaborating to design lessons
- ❏ Providing feedback and support in response to challenges
- ❏ Facilitating an inquiry model of lesson design
- ❏ Motivating and encouraging risk taking and innovation in technology integration and student-centered learning
- ❏ Fostering autonomy and independence
- ❏ Alleviating anxiety related to institutional knowledge and school systems

Resources

Training

- ❏ In my case, this is being provided by my graduate program. I wonder how future coaches could obtain proper training in a sustainable manner?

Time

- ❏ We have the same 3rd period prep each day, which allows for consistent and regular opportunities to meet.
- ❏ Earning clock hours and compensation for time spent beyond the school day is important to establishing value of the practice.

Communication

I have communicated with my principal to establish some initial goals for this coaching relationship. Frequent communication with her about goals and needs will only serve to support our plan. I'm not sure that I do not see a need to communicate about this coaching relationship to the staff. Since this relationship is not part of a developing coaching program, but more clearly part of a new teacher program, I unfortunately do not foresee a clear path for garnering support for future like practices with other partners.

Aligning Professional Development Efforts

It will be important to align our work with the collaboration done in our humanities department meetings. Additionally, the technology integration professional development that I am facilitating might a useful tool to provide collegial support for technology integration beyond me.

Measuring Success

Upon considering this question initially, I wrote the following.
> "In an effort to support the goals of our coaching team specifically, I would like to develop statements

> and likert scales related to humanities content mastery and student-centered technology use that could be used as a pre-assessment now and a post-assessment at the end of the school year to measure growth."
>
> However, I received feedback indicating that this might veer too close to evaluative practices. So, I am left wondering how to answer this question. One idea is to have my coaching partner develop her own set of pre and post questions just to identify her own growth. This would prevent me from serving in any evaluative role, while still allowing her to reflect on her personal growth.

SMART Goal Statement

By the end of March, all students in my 5th period social studies class will show they have increased their ability to identify and incorporate evidence into their writing. Students will achieve a 28% increase (Pre-Assessment Average: 1.9/4 = 47%) on the "Evidence" criterion of the "Middle School Social Studies Common Assessment Scoring Rubric" in order to indicate an average score of 3/4=75%, or"Meets Standard." Part of meeting this goal will be to create lessons and activities on a monthly basis that are aimed at teaching analysis via differentiated instruction for student learning level and engagement.

Additional Considerations to Goal

- ❏ How to incorporate identification of evidence in language arts as well as social studies in order to broaden student understanding of this school. The Writer's Workshop unit focused on explanatory writing in which students create companion books for their favorite novel is an opportunity to work on this skill.
- ❏ How to incorporate student-driven learning activities to meet this goal.
- ❏ How to use the essential questions of each social studies chapter to design lessons that practice this skill.

Lesson Improvement Process

Introduction

Given the large amount of new information my collaborating partner and mentee is tasked with acquiring as a new teacher, I did not think it prudent to request her creation of a written lesson plan for review. Instead, we spent a total of three meetings engaged in collaborative lesson designing practices, aimed at meeting her classroom needs and addressing the SMART goal created above.

Peer Coaching Meetings

First Meeting - November 11, 2015

One of my collaborating teacher's biggest goals was to have the opportunity to plan ahead for future units. Understandably, she had been feeling so pressed for time to plan daily lessons, that the ability to plan ahead felt challenging. As a result, we focused our first meeting on this initial goal. Given the SMART goal created together, we focused on a unit in her social studies course that would allow students to potentially begin to think about analysis skills. At the time of this meeting, my collaborating teacher was just finishing her instruction of the Medieval Europe unit and was looking ahead to transition to the Medieval Islamic World unit.

My focus as the peer coach during this first meeting focused on collaboration was to implement peer coaching communication skills. As it is my general habit to help others by saying, "Let me know show you what I did last year," it was my goal to not utter this phrase.

I have really struggled with how to best present our engagement in the lesson improvement process of peer coaching given that there was not a pre and post lesson to highlight. However unconventional, I felt that sharing the communication in our meetings to be the most useful. Below is the presentation of our communication and collaboration in three tables according to meeting date. The left side indicates my communication, and the right side, my collaborating partner's. As I did not record our sessions, the following represent basic notes and communication summaries. I asked my collaborating partner's permission to paraphrase her communication and she granted it. She responded by saying, "I don't mind at all if my name is used and if you use direct quotes or paraphrasing" (personal communication, December 6, 2015).

Peer Coach/Mentor	Collaborating Partner/Mentee
Ok. You shared with me previously that you would like to be able to think ahead to your next unit in social studies. I would begin by asking the overarching question of "What do you want your students to know?"	Students needed to learn the following chapters: Ch. 7 - The Origins and Spread of Islam Ch. 8 - Learning About World Religions: Islam Ch. 9 - Muslim Innovations and Adaptations Ch. 10 - From the Crusades to New Muslim Empires Last unit, I relied heavily on the textbook-provided student worksheets to create packets for students to use alongside the textbook readings. If possible, I would like to move away from this static style of learning for the upcoming unit.
Have you been able to look through these chapters to determine what is most important to student learning?	Not really.
Let's look together. Did you notice that there is an essential question at the beginning of each chapter?	Yes. I looked at these with the last unit. For this unit, they are: Ch. 7 - How did Islam originate and spread? Ch. 8 - How do the beliefs and practices of Islam shape Muslims' lives? Ch. 9 - What important innovations and adaptations did medieval Muslims make? Ch. 10 - How did the Crusades affect the lives of Christians, Muslims, and Jews?
So, you had said that differentiation was a big goal. Are you hoping that we might identify a specific lesson within these chapters that would lend itself to differentiation?	Yes.
Ch.9 - Muslim Innovations and Adaptations includes a	Sounds good.

variety of topics (early idea for camera obscura, early flying machine, astrolabe, clocks, etc.) for students to explore the history of. Since there are a multitude of topics for students to explore, this could be a place to differentiate by interest and ability.	
Maybe we could narrow the focus for differentiation first? Can you clarify what your goals with differentiation are?	I have some students that can't read and others that are bored in class. I sometimes feel like I am teaching a bunch of different classes at once and I'm not sure how to meet all of their needs at once in a single class period. For example, I have some students that won't do any work or cannot understand what he or she is reading without me sitting next to him or her.
I see. This is a common struggle for most teachers. There is only one of you! And, from what you've shared with me, you have very diverse classes. I think the fact that you are interested in differentiation at all shows that you are really focused on your students' needs. Have you thought about creating groupings by ability, tasked with learning about the various Muslim innovations and adaptations from the text?	That could work. Then, I could sit and work with the group with the most needs. Each group could have a different innovation they have to find out about. I guess I'm not sure where could they find this information though? Online? In articles?
Sure. So, another thing I was going to ask you about is 21st century skills. I often share the big four because they are pretty easy to remember: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. I'm just curious as we move forward if you feel like any of these are applicable to your ideas for differentiation.	Well, they would definitely be collaborating in their groups, as well as utilizing critical thinking if they were asked to answer questions about the innovation they learned about.
So, maybe let's talk about the questions you just mentioned asking students to answer. We highlighted the essential question at the beginning of the chapter (What important innovations and adaptations did medieval Muslims make?) Would you give all of the groups this same essential question identified above?	I would, but unfortunately the question is more of a "What" question. It doesn't really lend itself to critically thinking about the innovation they are learning about.
Great point. How else could we ask them to think critically?	Each group could write a one-sentence summary identifying the significance of their innovation to the Muslim world.
That's a great idea. I know you've had them use one-sentence summaries before, so this wouldn't	True. What if we asked, "How has the Muslim innovation or adaptation you

require much explanation for students. And, asking students to think about significance goes beyond the what. It asks students to analyze the impact of the innovation on perhaps culture, economy, or society. I wonder... What if the innovation *didn't* have an immediate impact on the Muslim world, but rather impacted societies in other parts of the world or the impact was centuries later?	investigated had an impact on human history?"
Nice. So I guess now we have to think about the resources. Where might students find this information?	If I have them research online, I fear this might be too much information for students to sort through in one class period. So, perhaps each group could have articles provided by me.
One idea might be to continue your desire for differentiation and find articles that not only match the topics but are targeted to their reading levels as well. Each group could read about a different topic. As a result, the different reading level of articles assigned to groupings by ability wouldn't even be apparent. This would maintain student dignity for the variety of learners in the room.	I could even have different sets of questions for each group depending on their article so that their critical thinking was more specific?
You could. How much work do you think this would be for you?	A lot.
Is there another way you could ask students to think critically and collaborate on their answers beyond the essential question you crafted without having to create separate questions?	I could utilize the reader's response idea from our literature circles. Indentify: -one question you have after reading -one connection (to self, world, etc.) -one passage of interest
That could work! What if we set a goal for next time to continue this process?	Ok I will read Chapter 9: Muslim Innovations and Adaptations so that I am familiar with the content.

Second Meeting - November 17, 2015

Peer Coach/Mentor	Collaborating Partner/Mentee
So, last time we talked about so many ideas. Just to refresh our memories, I have in my notes that the focus was differentiation, analysis, and Ch. 9 Muslim Innovations and Adaptations. Where do you want to go	Maybe we could talk about what students would do with the information they collected and created together in their groupings?

next?	
Great idea. So, I might suggest that we return to 21st century skills. You already identified how collaboration and critical thinking could be implemented effectively into this lesson. Is there a place for either of the other two, communication or creativity? Additionally, we have talked about differentiation in terms of groupings, but you mentioned to me in a previous chat that you were interested in implementing more student choice as well. What do you think?	Yeah. I guess I am realizing that this is a lot to figure out all at once.
It is. Well, previously you identified that your groupings would be homogenous by learning ability and reading level. Each groupings would read and critically think about a different innovation. However, your students are responsible for knowing about all of the innovations from the text, right?	Yes. So, maybe I could do a jigsaw where they share out afterwards.
A jigsaw is a great idea. While homogenous grouping would allow you to provide appropriate texts to students, have you ever thought about the benefits of heterogenous groupings?	One member from each homogeneous group could join together to form a new heterogeneous group. This new group would have a representative from each of the required innovations as a result.
That would be fantastic. Those students would then get to be an expert on each of their unique innovations. So then I'm wondering how could they bring all of their information together? It sounds like they will have to practice communication and collaboration again to do this which is great.	And, this might be the place for students to be creative in how they present everything?
Great idea. Any thoughts?	They could create a poster with all of the pieces.
Absolutely. This could also be a place to integrate technology or give students a lot of free choice as to how they present and put it together if you're interested. How comfortable are you assessing students if all of their projects were to be different?	I think so. My struggle with technology is that I don't have a lot of access in my room. Alternatively, bringing students to the computer lab doesn't seem to lend itself to group work.
Great points. Did you know that the library has iPads for teacher check out? I only learned about this at the end of last year myself.	Ok. How would I use them?
Well, I know you don't want this to be a big project. So, there are actually ways to implement technology in a quick and even temporary way. One ideas is to have students make short 1-2 minute videos highlighting	Oh. That could work. I'll think about that. That would allow students to communicate their learning and be creative in product creation.

what they learn. You can restrict their filming time to 10 minutes and set clear expectations of no editing etc. Another idea is to use a poster app allowing students to quickly paste text and pictures into virtual poster the size of the iPad screen. Both of these wouldn't need to be formally presented. Students could do a gallery walk, which I know is a strategy you use a lot in your classroom, to walk around the room and view everyone else's work.	
Exactly. So, I can start to look for articles that might work. I know of two resources that might have what we're looking for: NewsELA and ActivelyLearn. I'll see what I can find and bring these to share.	Perfect.

Third Meeting - November 25, 2015

The meeting began by again reviewing the notes we had taken from the last meeting. I then shared the unfortunate difficulty I had in finding articles specifically related to the Muslim Innovations and Adaptations content. We used this difficulty in finding resources to reroute the plan.

Peer Coach/Mentor	Collaborating Partner/Mentee
So, I had a great deal of difficulty finding articles related to each of the Muslim innovations and adaptations from the chapter.	I also looked and had trouble.
Would you mind if I still showed you what I found on NewsELA in case you're still interested in this resource at all?	I signed up for NewsELA too and definitely had some ideas about how I might use this resource.
Awesome. So, since we talked so much about leveled texts, I thought it was so useful how this resources can allow you to take the same topic and change the Lexile score of the reading to meet the needs of different students in the room. Even the heading changes at times to ensure comprehension.	I know. I could see this being really useful in my classroom.
So, given the difficulty had in finding articles for this specific purpose, how could we still utilize the great ideas you came up with in a different way? Some of the ideas that you highlighted were:	Well, another thing I am looking to implement is a regular current events practice. I know the other social studies teachers have talked about this as well.

● Jigsaw to thoughtfully put students into groups ● Finding leveled texts to differentiate learning ● Allowing for student choice in creativity	
That's fantastic. And, if you can find ways to tie any current events to themes from their medieval studies, this will really benefit students ability to think critically again.	Right. Did you do current events last year?
I did. I struggled at times with it for a variety of reasons to be honest. I'm certainly not an expert and I can share with you what I learned.	Please.
So, I structured my current events by assigning two students a week to find an article of interest that could be tied to the curriculum in some way to share with the class. Unfortunately, I came to realize that often news topics were so complex, students misunderstood the news story. I had to regularly intervene delicately to prevent misinformation about world events from being disseminated to the class. As you can see, sometimes you try new ideas and they don't work out and that's okay. To be honest, it did open the door for great conversations and learning opportunities. Students were still independent in their selection of current events, meaning the assignment was driven by student choice and interest, rather than it being supplied by me. It just wasn't sustainable to spend so much time each week presenting world events on the spot.	Maybe if I had this expectation, then I could design a current events practice knowing that students might need more support to understand topics.
That's great. You could even practice having the entire class read the same article. Perhaps if you still wanted to have students assigned each week, they could be responsible for selecting the article of their choice in advance and leading the start of the conversation?	So, now I'm wondering how NewsELA could play into this. I think it is a good resource because of the option to vary the Lexile score, but I would have to assign students to the article. Do you know if can students log into it?
They can. We could create a fake students and see what it looks like from the student end? It looks like students can see all of the same articles. They can even change the Lexile score of the article themselves to review the differences. That could be really powerful.	That's interesting. Do you think students would be able to take an article and change the Lexile score to find the version that they were most comfortable with?
I think what you are suggesting would give them ownership over their own learning for sure. And, you would be teaching students how to differentiate their	Additionally, they would all be reading the same content so I could manage the class all at once.

own learning. I am aware of research that suggests that student autonomy often increases student ability and interest. So, this would be another way to engage students.	
Exactly! What you are proposing is that this type of student activity is one way to meet the need to differentiate for all students in a single class period. And, if you ever wanted them to find different articles, you could trust this resource as a good tool for it.	And, even if I grouped students heterogeneously and they picked an article as a group, every student in the group could still read the version that met their own needs privately.
Great point. The ideas brainstormed in our previous meetings for student creativity could still be used to share out what students read in groups if that interests you. You really have brainstormed a lot of great ideas here that could be implemented in a variety of ways.	Thanks. I'll get back to you with what I'm thinking later.

Lesson Improvement Process

Foltos (2013) identifies two goals in his chapter "Lesson-Improvement Process": learning to use a lesson-design process and practicing "using the communication skills essential to coplan learning activities and provide feedback to others" (p. 121). I think the above communication highlights how both of these goals were met. In order to clarify this more specifically, I have outlined specific notes in relation to Foltos' model for lesson improvement. For clarity, the first iteration of the lesson design is a reference to the lesson design crafted in the first two meetings asking students to learn about different Muslim innovations and adaptations. The second iteration speaks the the third meeting's lesson design crafted around current events.

Create a Task

According to Foltos (2013), one of the most important elements of creating a task for student learning is to determine an essential question. This provide with focus for whatever product they are asked to create (Foltos, 2013). Wiggins (2007) identifies some elements are crucial to an essential question in his blog post, "What is an essential question?"I have quoted them below.

1. causes genuine and relevant inquiry into the big ideas and core content;
2. provokes deep thought, lively discussion, sustained inquiry, and new understanding as well as more questions;
3. requires students to consider alternatives, weigh evidence, support their ideas, and justify their answers;
4. stimulates vital, on-going rethinking of big ideas, assumptions, and prior lessons;
5. sparks meaningful connections with prior learning and personal experiences;
6. naturally recurs, creating opportunities for transfer to other situations and subjects.

The first iteration of lesson design crafted in the collaborative meetings with my collaborating teacher resulted in the essential question, "How has the Muslim innovation or adaptation you investigated had an impact on human history?" This essential question might meet the requirement of the first requirement, and it certainly met the

requirements of the other five requirements easily. While an essential question was not defined for the second iteration of the lesson design, working with student-selected current events and asking students to tie themes to current curriculum certainly also lends itself to meeting these requirements.

Part of creating a task is also reviewing it for effectiveness. Foltos shared a "Learning Activity Checklist" to include four components reviewed below (2013, p. 111). I have culled specific elements of this checklist that are most relevant to our collaboration process under each component below.

Standards-Based Task

Foltos wrote that a standards-based task can helps students to "Gain/improve specific knowledge or skills in a content area (state/national standards)" and to "Gain/improve problem-solving, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and other skills critical for college and careers" (2013, p. 111). The following Common Core State English Language Arts Standards and ISTE Student Standards are relevant in different iteration of our collaborative lesson improvement process shared above.

English Language Arts Standards, Grade 7

> Reading Informational Text, Key Ideas and Details
>> CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.2
>> Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
>
> Speaking and Listening, Comprehension and Collaboration
>> CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
>>
>> CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.2 Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.
>
> Speaking and Listening, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas
>> CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.5 Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.

ISTE Student Standards

> 1. Creativity and innovation
>> Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology.
>>> a. Apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes
>>> b. Create original works as a means of personal or group expression
>>> c. Use models and simulations to explore complex systems and issues
>>> d. Identify trends and forecast possibilities
>
> 2. Communication and collaboration
>> Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.

a. Interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts, or others employing a variety of digital environments and media

b. Communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats

d. Contribute to project teams to produce original works or solve problems

Engaging Task

Foltos stated that in an engaging task, students "Are given choices (topic, approach, etc.)," are asked to "Create a product/performance or gain competencies that have value to them and others outside of school," and "Are engaged in peer learning, such as open discussion, and are accountable to one another" (2013, p. 111). These three elements are uniquely embedded in the first iteration of the lesson design.

Problem-Based Task

While neither iteration of the lesson design asks students to solve a real-world problem, they both ask students to "Make a decisions or choice" and "Plan a course of action" (Foltos, 2013, p.111)..

Technology Enhances Academic Achievement

Finally, both iterations resulted in the use of technology in student learning. The reading of articles about Muslim innovations and adaptations and the subsequent creation of a virtual poster or a video, as well as the use of NewsELA to read current event news articles would "Give students access to high-quality information, primary documents, or points of view not available otherwise," "Differentiate learning for students with different needs," "Share ideas and collaborate with remote groups," "Gather, organize, synthesize, and analyze information and draw conclusions," and "Foster student discovery of a concept or construction of his or her own understanding of a concept" in various manners (Foltos, 2013, p. 111-112).

Define Standards

See Standards-Based Task above.

Learning Context

Foltos (2013) identified that it is important for learning contexts to provide students with choice in their learning and to encourage collaboration within the classroom. Both iterations of this lesson design worked to achieve these goals. My collaborating teacher's initial desire to move beyond the very passive utilization of worksheet packets as they corresponded to the textbook really highlighted her ability to understand this goal, even if she was unable to define it in terms of 21st century labels. Her astute goal truly propelled this collaboration in the right direction. Her inclination towards asking students to be active participants who were responsible for creating new meaning was a running thread.

Student Directions

We did not get to a point in our collaboration where crafting student directions was possible.

Reflection and Feedback

While my feedback as a peer coach was embedded throughout the collaboration process, I thought it really useful to share the reflection that my collaborating teacher had on the process. While she didn't specifically reflect on our communication methods or the process, she did summarize our work. As part of the district mentorship program, we are asked to submit monthly write-ups of our work to a supervisor. She wrote the independently wrote the summary for December, to include these three meetings. Her reflection on our work was not only in line with my understanding of our accomplishments, but she shared her initial utilization of this work in the classroom. The following has been quoted with her permission.

"The following was covered over the course of these meetings: Differentiation Strategies: *Jigsaw reading groups-* putting students in "expert groups" to read an article about their topic and then having one expert from each group form another group with the other experts. Students exchange information about their topics, but they have an opportunity to read and exchange ideas with their expert group ahead of time. *Differentiated Reading by Lexile Level-* Using NEWSELA to differentiate reading based on different lexile levels of students. Students can read the same articles, but students who are at a lower lexile are getting that information in a more digestible format. Great for ELL students, low readers, and high readers (make the lexile higher). **Example from my class:** One of my students is an ELL student. If she recieves the same article as most of the other students, she will spend the majority of her time translating domain-specific words that she is unfamiliar with. When she was given the article at a lower lexile, she was able to more easily digest the actual content and engage in a class discussion around the text. Similarly, I gave the lower lexile copy to another student who struggles with reading, and he found more success with the assignment. The students were not aware that they were given different articles because they look the same at first glance. NEWSELA is a resource I will continue to use, and differentiation based on lexile is a strategy I will continue to use. **Follow up:** I am going to try the jigsaw activity in the coming month(s) and try to break up "expert" groups based on different factors."

Assessment

We did not get to a place in our collaboration where crafting assessments was possible.

Resources

History Alive: Beyond the Medieval World social studies textbook
NewsELA
iPads
PicCollage

Reflection

I began by using the following rubric to self-assess the our collaborative work (Foltos, 2015). The results are highlighted below.

Lesson Improvement Process Rubric

While engaging in collaborative lesson improvement, to	Consistently	Mostly	Somewhat

what degree have you:			
Improved lessons by including attributes from the Learning Activity Checklist? (L.A.C.)	<mark>The L.A.C. has been addressed during every step of the lesson improvement process. All four areas of the L.A.C. are well-addressed in the lesson.</mark>	The L.A.C. has been addressed during most steps of the lesson improvement process and/or one area of the L.A.C. is not well-addressed in the lesson.	The L.A.C. has been addressed during some steps of the lesson improvement process and/or two or more areas of the L.A.C. are not well-addressed in the lesson.
Used the lesson improvement process to guide lesson improvement?	The lesson improvement process and the guidelines have been thoroughly followed.	<mark>The lesson improvement process has been followed and guidelines have mostly been followed.</mark>	One or more aspects of the lesson improvement process have not been followed.
Practiced coaching by using communication skills?	<mark>The communication skills of active listening, paraphrasing, and asking clarifying and probing questions are all in regular use.</mark>	All the communication skills are used most of the time and/or one of the communication skills is in infrequent use while the others are all in regular use.	All the communication skills are used some of the time and/or two or more of the communication skills are in infrequent use while the others are all in regular use.

While no physical materials, other than notes, were produced from these sessions, the amount of collaborative work achieved was notable. Most prominently, 21st century skills were addressed, essential questions were defined and redefined, differentiation was maintained as the main focus of the lesson, and technology was organically implemented. Regardless of how much of the collaboration led to direct implementation in my collaborating teacher's classroom, the collaboration left she and I with potential ideas for the future. If we were to follow-up on this lesson design, the goal might to target problem-based tasks, assessment practices as tied to the standards, and student directions.

Additionally, while this work was not directly tied to the SMART goal, both iterations of the lesson created scaffolding towards it. The pre and post social studies common assessments identified for data collection within the SMART goal ask students to read primary and secondary sources, pull common themes to create a claim, find evidence within the texts to support this claim and, finally, analyze this evidence in support of this claim. Asking students to read nonfiction text, collaborate to synthesize information, as well as communicate to creatively craft new meanings are all important places to start when teaching students analysis.

Of note was also our ability to move beyond the very necessary "just in time" meeting style previously needed to address institutional knowledge and curriculum need in favor of collaborative work. This laid a solid foundation for

collaboration of this kind in the future. I greatly benefited from this collaborative work as well. The ideas we brainstormed together are ones that I am excited to implement in my own classroom as well.

As stated previously, one of my most significant personal goals was to work on my communication skills to include active listening, paraphrasing, clarifying questions, and probing questions (Foltos, 2013). I really feel that this was a successful exercise in increasing my comfort level with these skills. I was aware that I did a lot more active listening. While the paraphrased summation of communication outlined above appears to suggest that I did a lot more talking by the sheer difference in numbers of words on each side of the table, this is mostly due in part to my inability to accurately recall all words spoken by my collaborating teacher. It is true that in retrospect I have no way of confirming my active listening achievement, but I do have distinct recollection of restraining myself from advocacy in favor of allowing her to finish her complete thought. Additionally, I actively worked to ensure that my advocacy was limited to sharing a past experience or two, and suggesting a few tools that might be of interest. Finally, active listening and paraphrasing lent itself to opportunities to provide recognition to my collaborating teacher for her success in the classroom already and her powerful ideas. While this type of communication is far from natural for me, it is increasingly comfortable for me to find and implement these communication tools in the moment.

Resources

Foltos, L. (2015). Lesson Improvement Process Rubric [Class handout]. Digital Education Leadership, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle, WA. Retrieved from https://docs.google.com/a/digitaledleadership.org/document/d/1LA-_M2d3HqVHHrOmizaBtgPpNcduPCfI7TIfdM3m8ok/edit?usp=sharing.

Foltos, L. (2013). *Peer coaching: unlocking the power of collaboration*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

International Society for Technology in Education. (2007). *ISTE Student Standards* [PDF]. Retrieved from https://www.iste.org/docs/pdfs/20-14_ISTE_Standards-S_PDF.pdf

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). *Common Core State Standards for English language arts and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects*. Washington, DC. Retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/

Wiggins, G. (2007). *What is an essential question?* Retrieved from http://www.authenticeducation.org/bigideas/article.lasso?artId=53