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When a teacher comes to you with a new digital tool, how do you keep the conversation around changing instructional practice?

- Think about digital tools within a framework of evidence-based literacy practices and research-based instructional techniques.
- Through the BDA cycle, help the teacher reflect on the “why” of using these tools. Ideally, the content, pedagogy and technology will all be essential. To be the perfect storm, one shouldn’t exist without the other.

The essential questions below can help you to define what the "good use" of technology looks like. They are meant to promote thinking about whether the use of technology is meaningful and relevant to the learning.

The questions are phrased in a way that would be used in the *Before* of a *Before, During, After* coaching cycle while designing a lesson. With some tweaking, the questions could also be used in the

During

phase when watching a lesson in action, or the

After

phase for reflection.

Engagement

First, does the use of technology increase student engagement?

- How will the use of this digital tool engage students with the content so that they can create, manipulate, and explore the content in ways that a traditional approach would not afford?
- Is the tool student-friendly and relatively easy to use?
- Can the content be easily imported and manipulated with the tool?
- Does it allow choice?
- Does it promote creativity?
- Would doing the same activity with other tools such as a chalkboard, whiteboard,

manipulatives, or paper and pencil be just as effective?

- Will this technology allow for different learning styles?
- Will it promote student-centered, self-directed learning?

Content/Standards

Not only is it important to talk about student engagement but how the tool will help instruction align to state standards.

- Does using the technology promote a deeper understanding of content and make its learning more effective?
- Does using this tool provide students with the ability to explore content that may not have been available to them without the technology?
- Does the tool support the outcomes expressed in the state standards?
- Does using this tool provide students with a way to demonstrate understanding?
- How will understanding be measured?

If the response to multiple questions is a No, then this is a perfect opportunity for a coaching conversation.

**adapted from a list co-created by RMC Virginia Glatzer and the PAECT Classrooms for the Future Coach listserv*

Today, the technology coach and the instructional coach cannot be mutually exclusive. Digital tools are simply more tools to add to your coaching tool belt. Coaches should experiment with the tools so that they know which will increase student engagement and improve student learning.

Click [here](#) for a list of resources related to coaching and the appropriate use of technology.

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