

Teaching Teachers: Professional Development that Supports Literacy Learning

by

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Abstract

As I explain in my review of the literature, there are many challenges to teaching global education. However, literature and literacy education present numerous opportunities for teaching from a global perspective. For this project, I prepared and facilitated 4 teacher professional development workshops intended to support global education and literacy learning for grade 4 to 7 students. Through a reflective process, I explored the complexities of professional development that supports literacy and global education. I analyzed of the value of the 4 workshops according to elements that I believe are significant. I also examined the workshops relative to the literature on adult education and teacher professional development. I explored various perspectives on adult education and made connections between adult learning theory and professional development for teachers. As a result of my analysis, I propose a differentiated and comprehensive model for professional development which includes a literacy coaching component.

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Susan Cruikshank

Dedication

For my husband, Colin Cruikshank, for his support and encouragement, and in memory of my father, Edward Creed – thank you both for believing in me.

And for my mother, Florence Creed, who taught me to appreciate books at an early age.

Chapter 1 -- Introduction

Imagine a literacy-focused professional development experience for teachers which is engaging, allows for self-directed learning, connects to classroom challenges and enables teachers to construct new knowledge that will help them to meet the needs of their students. This type of professional development often seems elusive and teacher feedback on professional development can be less than enthusiastic (Egawa, 2009). However, high-quality professional development opportunities that support both teacher and student learning are crucial as they promote effective teaching (Kinnucan-Welsch, Rosemary & Grogan, 2006). The International Reading Association (2000) also argues for professional development that supports teachers to improve their teaching practice. The need for high-quality professional development is clear.

Although this project did not initially begin with a professional development focus, there have been several critical incidents which have propelled my work in that direction. Newman (2000) defines critical incidents in teaching as “those moments which allow you to stand back and examine your beliefs and your teaching critically” (p.3). Over the course of my teaching career I have experienced many of these critical incidents in both subtle and powerful ways. Critical incidents have occurred as a result of reading a professional book, working with a challenging student or speaking with a colleague who invited me to look at my teaching in a new light.

As a result of such critical incidents, my project has taken the form of a series of professional development workshops for intermediate teachers based on global education and literacy. The purpose of this paper is to provide an analysis of the workshops. In addition, I explore ways in which the workshops were successful and areas for improvement. I also present

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a plan for future professional development for teachers which I believe will better meet the needs of both students and teachers at my school.

Over the course of my recent teaching career, certain critical incidents arose which caused me to reflect upon my teaching practice. One such incident had to do with a professional development workshop that I participated in on global education. This workshop was a school-based learning experience which was intended to familiarize teachers with a website in support of global education. I was impressed with many features of the website and intended to use several of the website's resources. However, by the end of the school year, I had used none of the resources with my students. At that point, I questioned why I had not followed through with the website resources even though they had seemed so promising. Why had my enthusiasm for the website waned? Had I missed the mark by not following through? Was I just too busy? Did I not care enough about global education for my students?

A second critical incident required me to shift my perspective and to look at teaching and learning through a new lens. As a result of staffing changes at my school, I took over the role of Junior School principal at the start of the 2010-2011 school year. This change in assignment provided me with an opportunity to take on an administrative role in addition to teaching four classes of global education per week with intermediate students. Although I had never planned on being an adult educator, I suddenly found myself faced with the prospect of being responsible for decisions around professional development for teachers. I was also responsible for delivering school-based professional development at various points in the school year. Never having been responsible for the development of others, I turned to models of professional development that I had been exposed to during my career as a teacher. I believed that these models of professional development, which for the most part followed the pattern of "outside expert" providing

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knowledge through a workshop format, represented the “right way” to do professional learning for teachers.

Another series of critical incidents occurred during the course of teaching global education with intermediate students at my school. I noticed that the most transformative learning occurred when I teamed literacy and global education. For example, at the start of the school year I chose to have the students work on a project with the theme of peace. They worked in groups to examine what peace looked like, sounded like, felt like, and even smelled like in various aspects of their lives (at school, at home, in the outdoors). They then wrote and illustrated peace poems. I was so impressed by how the students wrote from their hearts. In many cases, the writing was inspired. They were proud of the work that they had done and throughout the year reminded each other of the goals of a peaceful classroom. These goals included the use of respectful language, appreciation of differences and inclusive behaviour. Various other literacy and global education connections included a home-school reading unit with globally themed literature and a graphic story writing unit.

As a result of these critical incidents, I gained confidence in teaching global themes with the students. I knew I wanted to share my learning with the intermediate teachers. At the same time, I experienced much uncertainty about my ability to lead teachers in learning experiences. I was being asked to provide professional development experiences for intermediate teachers focusing on global education through literacy and yet, I questioned whether I had the skills to teach teachers. I wanted to be able to provide professional development that would be compelling enough that teachers would consider implementing the strategies and ideas that I offered. Equipped with enthusiasm and a desire to share my experiences, I planned and facilitated my series of workshops during the 2010-2011 school year.

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In preparing for these teacher workshops I read much about global education and its connections to literacy. Through my readings, it became apparent that there were numerous opportunities for students to learn from a global perspective through literacy. Some of the most convincing ideas came from Linda Christensen whose work in *Reading, Writing and Rising Up* (Christensen, 2000) and *Teaching for Joy and Justice* (Christensen, 2009), I found to be inspiring. Christensen's work filled my head with ideas on the extensive possibilities for sharing global education themes, such as appreciation for diversity and celebration of heritage, with both students and teachers. In addition to enjoying her writing style, I was absolutely impressed with her understanding of how reading and writing could truly raise up students who are disengaged. The teaching strategies and recounts of her own critical incidents in teaching led me to believe that other teachers would also appreciate her work.

A crucial piece of the preparation process that I failed to explore was that of understanding my learner: the teacher. Of course, after many years of teaching I knew that providing a student-centered classroom was essential to the underpinnings of learning. However, I made the assumption that I could teach adults in much the same way that I could teach my younger students. This assumption was a significant flaw in the success of the global education and literacy workshops that I would ultimately facilitate.

My subsequent research has focused on the adult learner and effective professional development. The work of Knowles (1977, 1984) has opened my eyes to the ways in which adult learners are uniquely different from younger learners. In addition, my exploration into self-directed learning (Merriam, 2001) has enabled me to understand the necessity for adult learners to drive their own learning experiences in connection to their daily lives. The role of experiential learning and the importance of reflection as a learning tool (Jordi, 2011) have helped me to

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expand my understanding of professional development. I now understand the importance of learning that occurs as a result of problem-solving in relation to real-life needs. Transformative learning experiences such as those described by Illeris (2009) were the type of learning experiences that I attempted to achieve through my workshops. I wanted the workshops to inspire teachers so that they would incorporate some of these approaches in their teaching. In addition, connections between adult learning theory and professional development experiences (Terehoff, 2002; Trotter, 2006) have helped me to understand that adult educators must focus on the needs of the adult learner when designing learning experiences for teachers.

Terehoff (2002) reminds us that those responsible for the professional development of teachers are often too focused on content when planning units of professional development. She raises the question: “are there elements missing from the process of professional development that keep teachers from being interested and engaged in the learning process?”(p. 66). After my experience in carrying out this project and the aforementioned teacher workshops, I would have to respond to her question in the affirmative. Principals and other adult educators must consider the needs of the learner first. They must strive to design learning experiences that put the learner at the center of a multi-faceted learning plan that can be differentiated according to student and teacher learning needs. They must be aware that professional development for teachers can take numerous forms and can be a dynamic and transformative experience for teachers.

Although the workshops that I designed fell short of my goals and did not have a significant influence on teaching practice, I can take much learning away from this experience. It has changed my perspective on professional development. I now think of professional learning for teachers in very different ways than I did early on in my career when I wanted “the expert” to provide the answers. As I go into my second year as principal, I am looking forward to

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implementing a plan for professional development that is inclusive in terms of allowing for mutual planning, self-directedness, and differentiation while demonstrating respect for the knowledge of teachers.

Chapter 2 -- Review of the Literature

Global Education: Implementation and Interpretations

Introduction.

In Canada, global education is widely recognized as one important aspect of students' schooling (Tye, 2003) particularly within the social studies curriculum. However, in reviewing the literature, I have found that numerous interpretations of the meaning of global education exist and the nature of global education is defined in many ways. In addition, few clear guidelines exist to help teachers tackle sometimes controversial global education themes. Furthermore, the literature shows that there are numerous educational opportunities to take advantage of rich connections between literacy and global education themes. For these reasons, this study of the relationship between global education and literacy is intended to contribute to a thorough understanding of the connections between these areas so as to support effective global education experiences for both teachers and students. I have chosen to focus on ways that professional development experiences for teachers might support the implementation of literacy-related global education. Therefore, the purpose for my project was to design a series of professional development workshops for grade 4 to 7 teachers on global education and its implementation through literacy.

Concept 1: Global education remains highly varied and broadly defined.

In my investigation of the literature, I was surprised to find many varied definitions for the term global education. I was also struck by the number of phrases associated with the notion of global education. Often, these phrases are used interchangeably and without specific reference or definition. Global education remains highly varied and lacks a clear and common conceptualization.

Mundy and Manion (2008) refer to global education as a “contested concept” (p. 943) and state that the roots of global education can be traced back to educational movements involving peace education, international development, human rights education, multicultural education, environmental education and social justice education. Within these movements, Tye (2003) points out how different themes were emphasized or de-emphasized according to the political pressures and world views of the time. Although it is apparent that there are certain common elements that define global education, it is also easy to find very different definitions each of which underscores specific perspectives.

In addition to a wide range of definitions, the concept of global education is further complicated by numerous interpretations of the goals of global education. These interpretations call for everything from radical change to simple implementation of curricular standards. Several researchers question the cultural authenticity of educational programs which provide surface interpretations of cultures. For example, in reviewing his personal experiences with multicultural education, Gorski (2007) states that “much of what passes for intercultural education practice, particularly in the US, *accentuates* rather than *undermines* existing social and political hierarchies” (p. 3). Renner, Brown, Steins and Burton (2010) echo Gorski’s view as they advocate for education and literacy efforts which will humanize and transform in order to create a just world. These researchers offer alternatives to simplistic portrayals of diverse cultures and suggest that an honest exploration of cultures would reveal multiple inequities and the need for social justice in today’s world.

Myers (2010) also expressed concern over the goals of global education and whether or not they align with the perceptions of students in a study of high school students who attended a summer international studies program. These students responded to questions regarding their

understanding of global citizenship. Questionnaire responses led Myers to conclude that a complete reinvention of citizenship education programs was necessary as the existing programs did not align with student perceptions of what it meant to be a global citizen. The students' interpretations of global citizenship involved two prominent themes. These themes focused on a moral commitment to improving the world and the requirement of a legal status such as a global passport. Myers suggests that if educators do not acknowledge and address student perceptions (which include multiple citizenship identities and a more interconnected world), "civic disengagement" (p. 499) will be the unintended result.

In contrast to these findings which recommend global education programs that include transformational learning and significant change, Mundy and Manion (2008) suggest that the actual characteristics of global education programs in Canada are quite different. In their study of global education in Canadian elementary schools (grade 4 to 6 focus), they found that although there was increased recognition of global education in formal curricula, "by and large, provincial and district level effort across Canada to support and communicate global education curricular goals is weak" (p. 958-959). Furthermore, in their discussion of practices within schools, they frequently found that global education was interpreted as a way of helping "distant others" (p. 960). Teachers and principals also stressed the need to encourage students to recognize how fortunate they were to live in Canada. While I don't contest this view about our good fortune, this stance can lead to a smugly uncritical self-satisfaction. There was little mention of larger global concerns or the need for active participation beyond fundraising efforts. Clearly, global education can be interpreted in numerous ways ranging from fairly radical programs with the intent to transform to programs based on ambivalent approaches such as those referred to in the Canadian study.

I found the work of Mundy and Manion (2008) to be most compelling as it relates to my experiences as a Canadian teacher of social studies, science and language arts. Within these three areas, global education themes are included in the formal curriculum guidelines. However, the interpretation of themes such as human rights, multiple perspectives, and tolerance are largely left to the individual teacher. In dealing with these themes, I often felt the need to tread carefully as I questioned my ability to interpret controversial topics with my students. Certainly, my own values led me to undertake service activities including initiatives that support environmental sustainability, critical thinking and tolerance, but I am more hesitant to teach potentially controversial themes such as those involving power and oppression as put forward by Gorski (2007) and Renner, Milton, Stiens and Burton (2010). My school context, my own background as a white, middle class female, and my desire to avoid controversy are underlying reasons to sidestep a more radical agenda. Renner et al. took a more extreme perspective perhaps because they were referring to a very different context in Jamaica. As a Canadian teacher in a school with students from privileged backgrounds, I identify with the work of Mundy and Manion (2008), as I believe their study to be representative of a Canadian context, whereas the study by Myers (2010) takes place with high school students in the United States. Despite the fact that the number of districts studied in Mundy and Manion's work was small (8 across Canada that agreed to participate), I find their results more representative of my perspective as a Canadian. Due to the exploratory nature of their study, unanswered questions still exist. However, the authenticity of the results is evident in detailed descriptions with examples of research questions and quotations from participants.

In summary, Mundy and Manion (2008) explain that global education is often thought of as existing along a continuum. Various interpretations exist along the continuum from recent

ideals (social justice education) to more traditional notions (teaching world issues). With this continuum in mind, I am prompted to reflect on where I would place my own beliefs and whether I am stimulated to move further toward either end.

Concept 2: Teachers are not well-prepared or well-supported to teach global education themes.

In my review of the literature, several studies noted the lack of preparation and support for teachers in the area of global education. I found few studies which suggested that new or experienced teachers were being supported to teach with a global education focus. Articles written by or about teachers who were teaching with a global orientation suggested that these teachers were doing something unusual. In addition, these teachers were often held up as examples of what more of us should be doing.

I found few studies which reported on the implementation of global education within a Canadian context. One study on this topic was that of Mundy and Manion (2008) referred to previously. These researchers found that much of what passed for global education in Canada was related to external partnerships with organizations such as World Vision and UNICEF. Decision-making with regard to which organizations to support was largely left up to teachers and schools. As a result, teachers often reported that they felt overwhelmed by the “volume of unvetted sources” (p. 958) and had little time to assess these materials. Also, most teacher-participants in this study reported that little support in the form of information or professional development was available in this case from provincial sources. Interviews at the district or provincial level revealed that most administrators believed that “global education was best left at the discretion of individual teachers” (p. 957).

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In a similar study in the United Kingdom, Davies (2006) cited the work of Steiner (1992), which found that teachers were more comfortable with topics such as environmental issues and other cultures. They lacked confidence in tackling potentially complex issues including the injustices of current systems including economic systems. Teachers were also unaware of resources that provided direction. Davies goes on to conclude that teachers lack confidence in teaching global themes which may be “problematic in a fragile multicultural classroom” (p. 20). Despite the fact that these two studies take place in very different contexts, similar themes indicate the need for teacher support in implementing global education. These findings are further supported by Evans (2006) in his study of citizenship education in Ontario and England. His qualitative research study of high school specialist teachers demonstrated that wide variations existed in the implementation of citizenship education due to various factors including lack of teacher knowledge and support. Although there are few Canadian studies on the topic of implementation of global education, the two mentioned here suggest that teachers require guidance and support in order to better implement global education topics.

Lastly, two studies on the topic of teacher education programs suggest that new teachers are not necessarily being prepared to teach for global issues or diversity. Merryfield (2000) reviewed the literature on global education in teacher training programs and found that there was little emphasis placed on this topic. In addition, she carried out a qualitative research study of 80 teacher educators who were identified as placing importance on global education in their programs for new teachers. She identified common characteristics of these teacher educators and concluded that they had all experienced discrimination of some type (racism, sexism, and class prejudice) early on in their lives. They also had significant experience with people different from themselves and they were aware that differences between people can be used by those in

powerful positions to promote privilege. As a result, these teachers felt compelled to teach from a perspective that valued diversity and equality. Merryfield advocates for more teacher educators to work with new teachers to develop a perspective that welcomes diversity and acknowledges global issues. As this study took place in the United States, a similar study of Canadian teacher educators would provide further insights.

In considering the kinds of support available for global education teachers, I chose to investigate the support provided by textbooks and other resource materials. In researching this topic, I referred to the work of Davies and Issitt (2005). These researchers examined the qualities of textbooks used in England, Australia and Canada (Ontario) to promote citizenship education. Their findings indicated that “most of the material ... focuses on national rather than global issues” (p. 399) and most of the books favour personal reflection on issues “as opposed to active involvement” (p. 399). Although I found the study thought-provoking, I would hesitate to over-generalize based on its conclusions. Only a small number of Canadian textbooks were examined and these books pertained to the Ontario curriculum. In addition, I believe that a textbook approach to teaching citizenship would seem to indicate a generally traditional approach. Nevertheless, this study does indicate that teachers cannot rely on textbooks to provide a sufficient approach to global education.

Finally, one article invited me to reflect on my own identity as a white, middle class, female teacher in relation to the multicultural context of a 21st century classroom. Banks (2001) describes his work as a teacher educator. He emphasizes the need for teachers to reflect on their own cultural, national and global identifications in an effort to examine their teaching and school contexts from a more critical view. Although Banks is putting forward his personal view of what

is important in teaching, I must acknowledge that reflective practice is a crucial part of examining one's own biases particularly when one is a part of the dominant monoculture.

In summary, I found that there was generally little support for teachers who wish to teach from a global education perspective. In many cases, Canadian teachers do not feel that they are well-supported by provincial or district levels in their attempts to incorporate global education. In addition, much decision-making around the implementation of global education is left to individual teachers despite the fact that little guidance is provided in this area. Teacher education programs may or may not prepare new teachers to take on global themes depending on the interests and motivations of individual teacher educators.

Concept 3: There are many rich opportunities to teach global education through literature.

The third concept which became apparent during my review of the literature on global education was the connection between literacy and numerous terms such as global citizenship, global citizenship education, social awareness, social justice, and social responsibility. Lobron and Selman (2007) refer to the “overlap between literacy skills and social awareness skills” (p. 535). In their case study of fourth grade student, Alleah, and her response to story discussions and strong social issues, they note that there are close linkages between literacy skills such as inferencing and social awareness skills such as the ability to see multiple perspectives. The use of poetry to teach social studies concepts, such as cultural diversity and social justice is outlined by McCall (2004). She suggests that poetry often provides a means to take on controversial topics or investigate the lives of marginalized groups in a “less-threatening manner” (p. 172). Ciardiello (2010) also provides evidence of the connection between literacy, social justice and civic responsibility. He suggests that by reading and writing social justice poetry which “protests

unfair and unjust living conditions” (p. 466), students can develop a sense of their citizenship responsibilities. Jocson (2009) also describes the power of poetry and words to become “weapons against various forms of oppression” (p. 273). She describes a qualitative research study with ninth and tenth grade students. This study involved a poetry writing program through a school-community partnership. She found that themes of social justice which mirrored students’ out-of-school lives not only caused students to write poetry, but also led to a sense of empowerment.

I found McCall’s (2004) reference to making issues less-threatening through poetry to be troubling as I believe that sometimes it is necessary to look honestly at an issue in order to promote understanding. However, while I was somewhat troubled by McCall’s interpretation, I was particularly interested in Jocson’s (2009) study. Jocson acknowledges several fundamental requirements for a successful fusion of poetry and social justice themes. Firstly, she recognizes the importance of respectful appreciation for students’ cultural backgrounds. Secondly, she emphasizes the power of words to create empathy, transform and enlighten. Although Jocson’s study was with ninth and tenth grade students, in my classroom experience with younger middle years students, I have often noted the incredible power of words to capture students’ imaginations and inspire them to think beyond their current circumstances.

Numerous other examples exist of powerful connections between literacy and social responsibility. In his outline of various social responsibility themes and their connections to literature, Wolk (2009) points out that “never before have teachers had so many remarkable books to bring to life in their classrooms and use to teach social responsibility” (p. 665). I would agree wholeheartedly with Wolk on this matter. The wide range of compelling books (eg. *A Picture Book of Anne Frank* by David Adler; *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros;

Passage to Freedom: The Sugihara Story by Ken Mochizuki) which can bring historical struggles or current day tensions to light provides teachers with tremendous opportunities for the teaching of global education principles. I would go further to suggest that skillful interpretations of these texts are crucial. It is not enough to merely read a book on a social justice theme. In order for students to experience the book in a meaningful way, the teacher must be willing to engage with the students in experiences that move beyond mere comprehension. This point is repeated by Glazier and Seo (2005) in their ethnographic study of the effect of multicultural literature on minority and majority students. The questioning and discussion techniques employed by the teacher had a direct impact on the richness of students' learning experiences.

An interesting qualitative research study conducted by Darvin (2009) investigated "the power of literacy to unite people and the ways in which writing ... can be used to promote communication, resilience and healing among disparate groups" (p. 50). This study focused on a bookmaking project with pre-adolescent Serbian and Bosnian girls at a summer camp sponsored by the Global Children's Organization. Darvin found that through shared writing and drawing experiences, the girls were able to appreciate each other despite ethnic and religious differences. Darvin goes further to suggest that similar writing experiences may provide opportunities for healing for children who have experienced other forms of suffering including violence and abuse. Once again, the power of words to transform is evident.

In conclusion, it is clear that numerous opportunities exist for literacy to be integrated into teaching practices which support global education. Skillful use of literature in addition to writing and representing experiences can promote literacy as well as global citizenship themes. Moreover, these experiences can sometimes lead to greater tolerance and understanding between antagonistic groups.

Conclusion.

Based on my review of the literature, I believe that global education is a complex issue due to widely differing interpretations and definitions. In addition, little support exists within school systems to assist teachers as they tackle this complicated topic. However, one positive note is that teachers can use literature of various forms to teach global education themes. Therefore, I believe that my professional development project will support grade 4 to 7 teachers in making decisions regarding how they will define and conceptualize global education and in implementing global education themes through literacy.

Theories and Models of Adult Education**Introduction.**

In this section of my review of the literature, I have attempted to provide an overview of the theories and models of adult education. I begin this review by researching the work of Malcolm Knowles as a foundational piece in the development of adult learning philosophy. Merriam (2009) points out that Knowles' theory of andragogy was how the field of adult education initially differentiated itself from theories on childhood education. She continues by stating that for many educators, andragogy provides a first look at understanding adult learners and for myself, I found Knowles' outline of adult learning principles informative. In addition to the work of Knowles, I have investigated other approaches to adult learning in order to give an overview. These approaches include transformative learning, experiential learning, self-directed learning and new directions in adult learning theory. Finally, I have made connections between the literature on adult learning and professional development for teachers. I believe that these

connections will provide a more complete appreciation for the needs of teachers in their professional development experiences.

Concept 1: Much of our current understanding of adult education is based on the work of Malcolm Knowles and his conceptualization of andragogy.

Much of my research into adult learners focuses on the work of Malcolm Knowles.

Knowles (1913-1997) is credited with redefining adult education and distinguishing it from the education of children. In 1968, he introduced the term “andragogy” to refer to the art and science of teaching adults (Merriam, 2001). Two years later, Knowles published *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy Versus Pedagogy* (Knowles, 1970). With the publication of this book, the term andragogy became even more widespread and the field of adult education more clearly defined.

In much of the literature, reference is made to sets of assumptions made by Knowles regarding the underlying characteristics of adult learners. These assumptions provide the foundation upon which an andragogical approach to teaching and learning is based. Knowles (1977, pp. 44-45) outlined four original assumptions about adult learners:

1. Self-concept: As a person matures his or her self-concept moves from being a dependent personality toward being a self-directed human being
2. Experience: As a person matures he or she accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasingly rich resource for learning
3. Readiness to learn: As a person matures his or her readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social roles
4. Orientation to learning: As a person matures his or her time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application and accordingly,

their orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of performance-centeredness

A fifth assumption was added in a paper written by Knowles in 1984:

5. Motivation to learn: As a person matures the motivation to learn is internal (p. 12)

After setting out these assumptions, Knowles (1984) goes on to explain their implications for teaching practice. These implications include the learning climate or environment, self-diagnosis of learning needs, the planning process, learning experiences and evaluation of learning. I have provided an overview of these implications below.

1. Learning climate: An environment which supports adult learning is the goal. Therefore, Knowles (1984) suggests that an informal and comfortable setting with adult-sized furnishings is preferable. He suggests that lighting and sound systems should be favourable for those with declining audiovisual acuity. Items which represent childishness should be avoided (e.g. chairs in rows or a teacher at a podium). The teacher's behaviour is critical. The teacher must convey an attitude of respect and friendliness toward the students. Listening to the students' points of view is also crucial.
2. Self-diagnosis of needs: As adult learners are self-directed by nature, it is important that they have input into decisions around their learning needs. Knowles describes various strategies for self-diagnosis of these needs. He suggests that the learner and teacher begin by working together to develop an ideal model of performance. Next the learner engages in a process of assessment of his or her current abilities in relation to the ideal model. Lastly the learner and the teacher identify where growth is required and what steps can be taken to move forward.

3. Planning process: Knowles asserts that adult learners are likely to react with resentment, apathy or withdrawal if they are not involved in the planning process for their learning. He proposes that self-diagnosed learning needs be translated into objectives which can then be supported through specific learning experiences. The planning process is seen to be a shared experience between the learner and the teacher.
4. Learning experiences: From an andragogical perspective, a learning experience is seen as a “learning-teaching transaction” and is the “mutual responsibility of the learners and teacher” (Knowles, 1984, p. 48). The teacher’s role is to be a resource person or co-inquirer. The adult learner is responsible for the learning and the teacher is to be a helper in the process.
5. Evaluation of learning: According to an andragogical approach to teaching and learning in which the teacher and learner have a reciprocally respectful relationship, evaluation should take place through a process of self-evaluation. For the teacher to evaluate the learner and award marks is deemed to be a disrespectful act.

In addition to the above implications, Knowles (1984) outlines the importance of the role of experience when teaching adult learners:

1. Emphasis on experiential techniques: Knowles suggests that because adults are resources in and of themselves, the experiences of the learners should be made a part of the learning process through activities such as discussion, role play, field projects, action projects and skill-practice exercises. He sees participation as a key element in the learning process and suggests that the more active the learner, the more will be learned.

2. **Emphasis on practical application:** Knowles advocates learning experiences which have practical applications for adult learners. As a result, learners can see how they can apply the learning to their everyday lives.

Knowles also outlines the importance of readiness to learn and its implications for teaching:

1. **Timing of learnings:** Knowles cautions that adult education programs must take into account the phases of growth of the learner and related developmental tasks.

Developmental psychologists define developmental tasks as tasks which arise at or about a certain phase of growth or period in an individual's life. These developmental tasks will determine the learner's readiness to learn.

2. **Grouping of learners:** Knowles suggests that the developmental stage of the learners should be taken into account when creating groupings.

Knowles refers to the importance of the orientation to learning of adult learners and its implications for teaching:

1. **The orientation of adult educators:** Adult educators must place emphasis on the needs of the learners themselves and incorporate what they need to learn into coursework.
2. **The organization of the curriculum:** Knowles suggests that the curriculum for adult learners be organized in terms of a problem-centered approach. Curriculum should be built around the kinds of problems that adult learners need to solve.
3. **The design of learning experiences:** Learning experiences for adults should begin with inquiry into the problems and concerns of the learner.

Since Knowles originally put forward his philosophy of adult learning, there has been much debate and discussion over its validity. Henschke (2011) provides an overview of the critique of andragogy citing numerous researchers who have outlined their concerns. For example, Jarvis argued that Knowles' theory of andragogy lacked sufficient empirical evidence to give reason for its status as a learning theory (as cited in Henschke, 2011, p. 34). Shore suggested that Knowles' andragogy encouraged a series of binary debates regarding adult versus child and isolation versus relation (as cited in Henschke, 2011, p. 34). Grace (2001) and Sandlin (2005) argue that Knowles' andragogy does not represent those from diverse backgrounds and with alternative perspectives. Merriam (2001) acknowledges that andragogy is a foundational piece in the development of adult learning theory. However, she goes on to suggest that more research is needed to foster a more complete understanding of the adult learner.

Despite criticism, Knowles' work provides a framework for a learner-centered perspective in adult education. From my perspective as a teacher, I believe that his acknowledgment of the importance of the learner's life experience, readiness to learn and need for relevant learning tasks makes complete sense. In reading the work of Knowles, I have tried to keep in mind that although his work is dated and may seem somewhat old-fashioned in terms of its prescribed nature and Knowles' writing style, his version of andragogy is a logical place to start in developing an understanding of adult education.

Concept 2: There are varied approaches to adult education which include self-directed learning, experiential learning and transformative learning.

Throughout the literature on adult learning there are several recurring approaches to adult education. Some of these learning models, such as self-directed learning and experiential

learning, have appeared in the literature over time and have deep-rooted connections to Knowles' work. Connections exist between these models and current directions in adult education.

Self-directed learning.

Merriam (2001) provides a brief overview of the history of self-directed learning research with adult learners. She explains that during the 1960s and 1970s, researchers began to acknowledge self-directed learning as a legitimate form of study. In addition, she defines self-directed learning as that learning which occurs as a regular part of daily living and does not necessarily involve a teacher. Hanstock (2004) also acknowledges the importance of self-directed learning (also referred to in her case study as informal learning) when she notes that adult educators are acknowledging "the increasing number of adults who have created their own education and made a significant impact on their world without a formal educative base beyond secondary school" (p. 73). According to these researchers, self-directed learning is a valid form of study.

Merriam and Caffarella (1999) outline self-directed learning in terms of its goals, the process by which it occurs and the learner. The goals vary but essentially focus on the development of the learner as a self-directed being; the development of critical reflection, which supports transformational learning; and the promotion of learning for social action. The process of self-directed learning can take many forms. Early models (Knowles, 1975) are based on a linear approach whereby the learner's needs are assessed, tasks and resources are chosen and an evaluation process occurs. More current models, such as the informal and incidental learning model developed by Marsick, Watkins, Callahan and Volpe (2009), provide a more interactive approach which takes into account the context and various stages of reflection on the part of the learner.

Experiential learning.

Experiential learning or learning which occurs as a result of experience has numerous connections in the literature to workplace learning, informal learning and reflective practices. Marsick, Watkins, Callahan and Volpe (2009) refer to experiential learning as a means of problem-solving through reflective thought. Indeed, reflective thought processes are highlighted as being an important part of the experiential learning process. An analysis of the process of reflective thought is provided by Marsick et al., (2009) as they describe a “disjuncture between what is expected and what occurs” (p. 572) leading to a re-thinking of the problem and potential solutions. This process of reflection and problem solving may occur several times in a trial and error process as the learner searches for a favourable outcome.

Although there is much literature written in support of this reflective learning process, the value of reflection as a learning tool has been debated. Jordi (2011) explains that the process of reflection is considered by some researchers to be inherently biased and based on a “mentalist prejudice” (p. 182). He nonetheless is an advocate for reflection as a learning tool particularly with regard to experiential learning. Cox (2005) also explains the value of reflective processes in her study of adult learners in a work-based learning activity. These learners were asked to reflect on their learning experiences in reflection-on-action diaries. Cox explains that the responses to the structured diary format were generally favourable and that the diaries acted as supports for learning. She does, however, highlight some concerns such as the need that some learners had for further support in the reflective process, the tendency for some learners to use the diary as a form of negative self-criticism, and trust issues because the diaries were to be read by the researcher. Some learners also hesitated to elaborate fully on their learning because they felt that their experiences were insignificant in some way.

Another study, focusing on the use of portfolio creation to support adult learning, is outlined by Brown (2002). Through a portfolio project, she sought to provide university students with an opportunity to engage in self-reflection and potentially transformative learning. The process of reflection and portfolio creation enabled the learners to analyze their learning in new ways. Brown states that the learners began to appreciate their growth and develop deep self-knowledge.

Reflection is a key component of experiential learning. The reflective process can take place in many ways including written diaries or journals and portfolios. Despite the fact that the reflective process may not come readily to all learners, self-reflection can lead to greater self-awareness and provide insights during the learning process.

Transformative learning.

Transformative learning is also described in the literature on adult learning. Originally proposed by Mezirow (1991), transformative learning suggests that the learner will experience some sort of profound change as a result of the learning experience. Illeris (2009) describes this kind of learning as “not something to be remembered and recalled, but something that has become part of the person” (p. 142). He goes on to explain that transformative learning is typified by a restructuring of emotional and social patterns and may even involve the learner in crisis-like challenges. This type of learning has a profound impact on the learner.

Numerous research studies provide insight into this transformative process. For example, one study describes the critical role of the teacher in creating trusting relationships with learners and positive learning experiences which will allow for transformative learning to take place (Giles & Alderson, 2008). Portfolio creation and deep reflection are also outlined in Brown (2002) and Stansberry and Kymes (2007) as an approach which fosters transformative learning.

In addition, teacher writing groups and reflective writing practice are also presented as a potentially transformative learning process in Brooke, Coyle and Walden (2005) and in Brown (2002).

In addition to self-directed learning, experiential learning and transformative learning, current interest is focused on several new directions. According to Merriam et al. (2009), spirituality and adult learning, additional interpretations of transformative learning, and the neuroscience of adult learning are some of the new ways of studying and understanding adult learners and their needs. Notwithstanding the seeming number of approaches to adult learning, it is clear that researchers are still attempting to understand how to engage adult learners. There exists much debate over not only the approaches themselves, but also how best to implement them.

Concept 3: There are elements of adult learning in the professional development of teachers.

Elements of adult learning approaches also appear in the literature on teacher professional development. As adult learning theories provide insight into ways adult learners learn best, it is reasonable to believe that adult learning principles can support better professional development practices for teachers. Trotter (2006) makes connections between adult learning theory and professional development. She points to teachers' needs for self-direction, practical application of learning, and active learning in their professional development. She refers to teachers wanting learning experiences that are classroom-related, opportunities to work with colleagues and problem-solve classroom scenarios, and the ability to plan the direction of professional development.

Terehoff (2002) examines the principles of andragogy with reference to the work of Malcolm Knowles. She applies these principles to professional development planning. She connects her analysis to the challenges that principals face in developing school-based professional development programs and suggests that in order for teachers to enthusiastically embrace professional development, the needs of the adult learner must be considered. These needs include self-directedness, acknowledgement of experience, readiness (not all teachers are at the same stage in their journey as professionals), and orientation to learning (a problem-solving approach). In addition, Terehoff stipulates that the best professional development for teachers will include a physical and psychological environment that is stimulating and includes collaborative planning for learning, consideration of teachers' needs and interests, communicated goals and objectives, a learner-centered program design, a collaborative approach to implementation, and an evaluation process.

Several research studies provide examples of professional development experiences for teachers which follow an andragogical approach. For example, Grenier (2010) describes the passionate responses of teachers involved in a museum-initiated summer program. The principles of active involvement, self-directedness and application to the classroom were evident in this type of professional development program. Brooke, Coyle and Walden (2005) also highlight the importance of self-directedness and acknowledgement of experience in their study of teacher writing circles. Shanklin (2009) describes several current approaches to professional development which support many of the principles of adult learning theory. She outlines approaches such as job-embedded professional development (peer coaching, coaching, and online assistance). She also suggests that professional associations, journal subscriptions and online sharing of teaching ideas can be excellent ways to participate in professional

development. All of her suggestions would allow teachers to participate in a self-directed fashion making personal choices about their learning according to self-assessment of needs.

Conclusion.

It is clear that there is much debate and discussion within the literature on adult learning theory. Varying approaches and a need for future research into best practices provide fuel for this discussion. However, it is clear that adult learning theory has connections to the design of professional development experiences for teachers. By keeping the essential elements of adult learning theory in mind, adult educators can plan learning experiences for teachers which will be more likely to fully meet their needs.

Implications for Teacher Professional Development

Introduction.

The expectations for classroom teachers are always changing. These changes may be due to the introduction of a new program, a change in teaching assignment, the needs of a new student or a personal desire to improve one's instruction. Professional development that supports teachers as they tackle these changes is crucial to excellent teaching. Although there are varying opinions on what makes for effective professional development, there is substantial evidence that it is the teacher who influences student learning most profoundly (International Reading Association, 2000; Morewood, Ankrum & Bean, 2010). This review of the literature will identify current research in professional development for teachers which argues for ongoing, classroom-related professional development which is differentiated to meet the needs of teacher and student learners. In addition, a review of the literature on literacy coaching will outline ways that this form of professional development can support literacy pedagogy.

Concept 1: Professional development is a journey that occurs over the course of a teacher's career.

Much of the current research argues for ongoing professional development that is more comprehensive than a one or two day workshop approach. Van Horn (2006) offers Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) interesting model of teacher learning based on the relationship between knowledge and practice. According to this model, knowledge-for-practice refers to teachers as knowledge users who apply particular learned skills to a teaching situation. Knowledge-in-practice refers to teachers as generators of knowledge as they move through a process of practice and reflection. Knowledge-of-practice refers to teachers as having an important role in adding to the knowledge base of the teaching profession. Based on this model, the act of teaching becomes an integral part of the professional development process with sustained job-embedded learning as the result. This interpretation of professional development is very different than that of the workshop approach with a fixed beginning and end. Professional development is seen as being linked to the teacher's daily classroom work and to the greater understanding of educational practice.

Collinson et al. (2009) also refer to the changing face of teacher professional development. These researchers see professional development in the twenty-first century shifting from teaching as a set of skills to be learned to teacher learning. They go on to describe the efforts of several countries in which teacher professional development is becoming more connected to daily teaching practice and the notion of lifelong learning. As an example the authors provide the model of Scotland's Continuous Professional Development policy which aims to support teachers to engage in career-long professional development in various formats including school-based and personal interest.

Stover, Kissel, Haag and Shoniker (2011) describe the importance of ongoing adult learning which they believe will “inspire teachers to be reflective and make changes” (p. 507). They suggest that this type of professional development lends itself to differentiation which will allow for a “more effective form of professional development than the one-day staff development workshop” (p. 499). According to these researchers, the value of ongoing professional development can be found in relation to differentiation according to teacher and student needs.

One 5-year study investigated the relationship between middle and high school student literacy achievement and teacher professional involvement (Langer, 2000). Langer determined that the schools most effective in supporting student literacy achievement fostered an atmosphere that promoted professional development for teachers. She discovered that:

...the most effective schools and districts nurtured a climate that 1) orchestrated coordinated efforts to improve student achievement, 2) fostered teacher preparation in a variety of professional communities, 3) created structured improvement activities in ways that offered teachers a strong sense of agency, 4) valued commitment to the profession of teaching, 5) engendered a caring attitude to colleagues and students, 6) fostered a deep respect for lifelong learning. (p. 397)

Langer’s findings indicate that ongoing professional development activities which bring teachers together in a common purpose have a positive effect on teacher learning and in turn, student achievement. In addition, the notion of teachers working together as professionals who can have a positive impact on their schools suggests that effective professional development activities are more comprehensive than a workshop delivered by an outside expert. This type of

teacher learning is part of an in-progress style of professional development very much connected to the daily lives of members of the school community.

One feature of professional development that is sometimes overlooked is its ability to uplift and inspire teachers. Teaching is a demanding profession and professional communities such as those referred to by Langer (2000) provide long-term inspiration and support for teachers. In reflecting on her own involvement in a summer writing program for teachers, middle-school teacher, Robyn Seglem (2008) notes “I now belonged to a learning community that continued to push me as a professional and provide support through the rough times that eventually occur for all teachers” (p. 36). It is evident that this type of professional fellowship has the potential to assist teachers to move forward as professionals and to become resources for each other. These kinds of rewarding professional relationships do not develop in the course of a single day but are nurtured over time. Reflection, an integral component of these learning communities, also occurs over time. Moore and Whitfield (2008) elaborate on the nature of reflection and its importance for teachers. They refer to reflection as a process which can inspire teachers toward personal and professional growth. In order for these reflective communities to be successful, they must become a part of the culture of the school and be maintained in an ongoing fashion.

In contrast to those who advocate for professional development other than workshops, Guskey and Yoon (2009) suggest that workshops are not “the poster child of ineffective practice” in professional development as they are often portrayed (p. 496). They add that with follow-up and sustained support, workshops can provide effective professional development. In addition, these researchers argue that school-based teams of teachers working to resolve educational challenges are not enough to promote effective professional development. Guskey

and Yoon suggest that external expertise is often required to promote real change. In addition, they point out that ongoing professional development must be well-chosen. They explain that although adequate time must be allotted for professional development, the initiatives themselves must support sound educational practices. In other words, real improvement in student achievement comes as a result of ongoing and thoughtfully planned professional development.

The literature suggests that effective professional development is ongoing and embedded in the school culture. Although one or two day workshops are often criticized as being ineffective, with follow-up they can provide for teacher learning needs. In this way, workshops can become a part of the ongoing professional development plan for the school as well as providing the expert support that is sometimes required.

Concept 2: A differentiated approach to professional development will meet the needs of diverse teacher learners.

Just as students have varying learning needs, so do teachers. Teachers' learning needs vary depending on their years of experience, their educational background, the subject areas they teach, their interests and the classroom challenges they face. Failure to take these factors into consideration when planning professional development experiences for teachers indicates that one version of information is to be delivered to all teachers regardless of their current needs. A differentiated approach to professional development opens up the possibilities to include a range of needs and learning styles.

In my analysis of the literature on professional development, there are many references to the current interest in differentiation of learning experiences for teachers. For example, Van Horn (2006) provides an overview of the stages of a teacher's career and describes the types of learning that teachers may require according to their position on this continuum. She explains

Teaching teachers

that an internship phase occurs early on in a teacher's career. The internship phase evolves into a problem-solving approach to professional development as a teacher gains experience. This problem-solving approach develops in response to the day-to-day challenges of the classroom. Finally, additional certification or graduate degrees comprise professional development opportunities for experienced teachers. Over the course of a teacher's career, various types of professional development best suit the needs of the teacher. She explains that professional development needs will shift according to "a new content, a new venue, a new age group..." and that "in order to sustain ourselves, we must recognize what we need as professionals and seek out experiences and people who will fulfill those needs..." (p. 63). Clearly, professional development is not the same for every teacher and requirements will change over the course of one's career.

Semadeni (2010) describes a highly successful teacher-led professional development program in which choice is a key factor. This program called "Fusion" enables teacher teams to choose from various modules provided by the district. Teachers are not required to participate, but many do. Lead-teachers are chosen by members of the teaching faculty. These lead-teachers take on a leadership role in planning the Fusion modules workshops. The high rate of success in terms of teacher motivation and leadership demonstrates that choice is an important part of the learning process for teachers. Indeed, if teachers in mid-career are driven by the need to solve classroom-related problems as Van Horn (2006) suggests, then the ability to choose the learning module would have a high motivational impact. Semadani (2010) summarizes by noting that with increased diversity in student populations, "all teachers will need to master a large repertoire of instructional strategies" (p. 69). This need for a broad range of strategies supports the notion of differentiated professional development for teachers.

Further evidence for the benefits of differentiated professional development comes from a study of one principal's approach to fostering learning experiences for all teachers in her middle school (Kose, 2007). This case study examined the influence the principal had in providing professional development for all teachers in the area of social justice. The principal used a model of differentiated professional development with teachers much the same way she had applied a differentiated approach to teaching. Essentially, professional development was designed for the whole staff (professional development that supports the school vision and school-wide programming), smaller groups of teachers, and individualized support. The professional development facilitated by this principal was multi-faceted, creatively-supported and ongoing. The principal drew from a wide range of resources including International Baccalaureate training, summer institutes that she had attended and professional reading. Professional development took place during staff meetings, through book clubs, through subject area and specialist teams, one-on-one conversations, mentor groups, encouragement for teachers to attend workshops of interest and by providing opportunities for teachers to share their expertise with each other. She was also strategic in hiring teachers with specific specialties who could act as mentors. Although the article does not elaborate on the extent to which teachers engaged in the professional development opportunities, it does provide a framework for differentiated professional development in middle schools.

An interesting application of differentiated professional development to literacy coaching is outlined by Stover, Kissel, Haag and Shoniker (2011) in their description of the work of three literacy coaches. In their study, they examined various ways that literacy coaches sought to meet the needs of the teachers with whom they worked. For example, the coaches used various means to determine the teachers' needs, such as surveys, coaching conversations, and team meetings.

As a result of the pre-assessment, the coaches worked with the teachers making suggestions for ways to move forward. These suggestions resulted in the teachers using reflective diaries and videotaped lessons. The researchers note that through this collegial process “the teachers appreciated being treated like professionals and felt that their opinions and experience were valued” (p. 504). By working one-on-one with the teachers, these literacy coaches were able to differentiate learning to meet the needs of the teachers and their students. Furthermore, the respectful relationship between teacher and coach helped to create a climate within which change and growth could occur.

Concept 3: Literacy coaching is increasingly acknowledged as an effective form of professional development.

Literacy coaching is gaining increasing amounts of attention as a form of professional development which connects directly to classroom-related goals. Peer coaching as a method of professional development has been in existence for many years. Showers and Joyce (1996) outline the evolution of peer coaching since the 1980s and point to its benefits in the implementation of professional learning. The success of peer coaching carries over to student achievement according to their analysis. Peer coaching and coaching models of professional development are nothing new and their successes have been demonstrated.

Despite the fact that successful peer coaching models exist, there are still many questions arising in the literature about literacy coaching specifically. The questions often point to doubts about the value of literacy coaching, the role of literacy coaches, training for literacy coaches and standards for literacy coaching practices. Robinson, Egawa, Buly and Coskie (2005) discuss many of these questions and provide valuable background information on coaching. They suggest that there is research on coaching which supports its value as a form of professional

development for teachers. They go on to explain that there are multiple forms of coaching; the main difference in coaching models is linked to the purpose for the coaching. The two models most frequently used are the expert and guided models. The expert model indicates that the coach has been trained in a particular strategy and is responsible for training teachers in the strategy. The guided model is more collaborative in nature and focuses on the teacher and coach working together to improve understanding. Robinson et al. (2005) also outline various coaching experiences including conversations between teacher and coach, observations of lessons either taught by the coach or the teacher, reflective conversations following the observation and goal setting.

The work of Robinson et al. (2005) provides a glimpse into the world of literacy coaching. However, to gain a more in-depth understanding, the work of Kinnucan-Welsch, Rosemary and Grogan (2006) is valuable. These researchers describe a professional development initiative started in 2000 called The Literacy Specialist Project. The Literacy Specialist Project provides training for literacy specialists in order that they may “disseminate widely foundational knowledge of literacy pedagogy” (p. 426). Various design principles of high-quality professional development such as connections to classroom-related goals, active learning for teachers, job-embeddedness, continuity, inquiry-relatedness and coherency across the professional development system are then examined in relation to the project. The authors point out that the design principles for high-quality professional development are interwoven throughout the project. As a result, they suggest that The Literacy Specialist Project does “support teacher learning and student learning through change in practice” (p. 434).

Further insight into literacy coaching is provided by Blamey, Meyer and Walpole (2009) in their study of middle and high school literacy coaches regarding their qualifications and roles.

They carried out an online survey of 147 literacy coaches. The results of the survey indicated that most of the coaches held advanced training in literacy. Many of the coaches indicated that their roles and responsibilities in schools were largely undefined. However, to varying degrees they worked as collaborator, coach and evaluator. Personal attributes that assisted them in their work were optimism, communication skills and commitment. Recommendations to new coaches included the need to differentiate professional development for teachers, the importance of presenting oneself as a credible teacher, and being diligent about analyzing data regarding student achievement. Although this study provides some evidence of the roles of literacy coaches, it is interesting to note that despite the fact that standards for literacy coaches exist (International Reading Association, 2006), many of the coaches felt that their roles and responsibilities were ambiguous. This ambiguity is unfortunate as Buly, Coskie, Robinson and Egawa (2006) point out that the most effective literacy coaches have clearly defined job descriptions. Perhaps because of the newness of the literacy coach's role, administrators and teachers are unclear about how to work with these professionals.

Although the majority of studies on literacy coaching are from the United States, one Canadian study provided insight into the role of literacy coaches. Lynch and Ferguson (2010) cite the work of Dole and Donaldson (2006) noting that literacy coaching in Canadian schools is "gaining in popularity despite a limited evidence base to support it" (p. 200). As a result of their interviews with thirteen Canadian literacy coaches, Lynch and Ferguson found that there were a number of barriers to the success of literacy coaching including limited principal support, uncertainty of roles and teacher resistance. In response to these barriers, the study offers suggestions such as clarification of the coach's role, the development of positive relationships between teachers and coaches and a reduction in the number of schools to service for individual

coaches. While this study calls for further research into the effects of literacy coaching on student achievement and professional development, the researchers argue that before conclusions be made, literacy coaches must be given opportunities to work under circumstances which enable them to provide optimal support.

Shanklin (2007) makes valuable recommendations regarding the ways that middle school teachers can work with literacy coaches successfully. When teachers and coaches work together, Shanklin argues that certain protocols can help to foster a positive working relationship. For example, Shanklin notes that teachers might wish to seek the assistance of a literacy coach when they are implementing a new strategy or a new literacy program. She suggests that an initial meeting with a literacy coach might involve a preconference, in-classroom observation of the coach using the new strategy, and a follow-up conversation. She states that it is important for the coach and the teacher to be clear on the goals for the session and the literacy strategies that are to be highlighted. I believe that the structure of this type of coaching model would allow for a more productive relationship between coach and teacher. Steckel (2009) takes Shanklin's (2007) recommendations one step further in her case study of two literacy coaches and their impact on teacher and student learning. She suggests that in addition to effective coaching skills, it is imperative that the school culture supports teacher learning. Within a supportive school culture, coaching requirements such as the devotion of time to professional development activities, the organization of teacher meetings with coaches, and the creation of time and space for peer coaching are more likely to be met.

According to Steckel (2009), much of the writing on literacy coaching as a form of professional development is devoted to handbooks and guidelines for professional standards. She recommends that further research into the school-based work of literacy coaches would be

beneficial to the field. In particular, it would be valuable to know if and how literacy coaches have had an impact on teacher and student learning.

Conclusion.

According to the literature, there is much support for teacher professional development that is ongoing and embedded in the culture of the school. In addition, differentiated professional development can take many forms and is more likely to meet the needs of teacher and student learning. Literacy coaching is becoming increasingly recognized as a valuable tool for teacher professional development. However, there is still much to be learned about how to best utilize the skills and knowledge of literacy coaches. In addition, studies which would provide insights into links between student achievement and literacy coaching would be valuable. Further research in the area of literacy coaching, particularly in middle and high school settings, would assist in creating models to guide practice.

Chapter 3 -- Analysis of the Global Education through Literacy Workshops

The Workshops

My project consisted of a series of four professional development workshops which I presented for intermediate teachers throughout the 2010-2011 school year. These workshops were planned to take place during early dismissal meetings which occur on the first Friday of each month. The meetings run from 2:30 pm until 3:30 pm. All teachers are expected to attend. Historically, these meetings have been organized into primary (Kindergarten to Grade 3) and intermediate (Grade 4 to 7) teacher groups and were facilitated either by the Junior School principal or by the primary and intermediate coordinators. In addition to the teachers of core subjects (language arts, math, science and social studies) who attended, several specialist teachers also attended. These teachers included an art specialist, a French language specialist and a music specialist.

In addition to these workshops, it is important to note that I was also teaching global education through literacy classes with Grade 4 to 7 students. Each grade was scheduled for one class per week. The teacher remained in the classroom while I was teaching. These classes enabled me to share various literacy teaching strategies which supported a global education perspective. Although I did not realize it initially, these classes became an important part of the professional development experience for teachers and enabled us to share ideas in an ongoing and classroom-connected way.

The intermediate teacher workshops focused on global education through literacy. I chose this topic because the implementation of global education teaching strategies was a goal of our school strategic plan. Although I originally intended to complete the workshops by December 2010, I ended up taking a longer timeline due to various interruptions to our planned schedule for

the early dismissal meetings. These interruptions ranged from report card writing pressures and Christmas concert rehearsals to illness and sports events. As a result, the actual dates for the workshops were October 15, 2010, December 1, 2010, January 28, 2011 and April 8, 2011.

The format for the workshops consisted of a one hour session in which I presented information to the whole group. On one occasion during the second workshop, I had the teachers work in groups to carry out a sorting activity. However, for the most part, all teachers who attended the sessions were asked to do the same activity. I did not pre-assess teacher knowledge or interest in the topic of global education, although during the third workshop, I asked them to share the kinds of strategies that they had students engage in which fostered an appreciation for diversity. The planning for the workshops was my sole responsibility although I did reflect on the level of engagement of the teachers in my planning. An overview of the workshops follows.

Fig 1. Overview of the Global Education and Literacy Workshops

| | |
|------------|---|
| Workshop 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction and Welcome • Read and discuss Ayers quote from <i>Teaching toward Freedom: Moral Commitment and Ethical Action in the Classroom</i> • Read and discuss Wilhelm article, <i>Diversity brings vitality: Lessons from international literacy</i> • Consider themes from the Wilhelm article which pertain to our school context |
| Workshop 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and review of last session • Begin with a question: What is global education? • Sorting activity (teachers sort concept cards according to whether |

| | |
|------------|--|
| | <p>or not the concepts represent global themes-what global education is and isn't)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of choices in the sorting activity • Valuing of diversity emerged as an important theme for our school at the last workshop so I shared <i>All the Colors of the Earth</i> by Sheila Hamanaka and we discussed possible ways to use this children's book with middle years students |
| Workshop 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and review of sorting activity from last session • Question- How do you currently acknowledge and honour diversity in your classrooms? • Writing Exercise to support diversity (based on a writing lesson from <i>Reading, Writing and Rising Up</i> by Linda Christensen) • Writing time • How do you see this writing activity supporting an appreciation of diversity in your classrooms? |
| Workshop 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Question- What are some ways that we can foster an appreciation of diversity through literature? • Ideas/Sharing • I share my book bin of Notable Books for a Global Society • Discuss possible ways to use these books to support literacy and global themes |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present the Global Education Home Reading Program which is being implemented in Grade 6 |
|--|---|

After each of the workshops, I engaged in a process of self-reflection. I made notes on the workshop outcomes including the engagement level of teachers, the activities and resources used, my feelings toward the workshop experience, questions that arose from the workshop experience, personal insights and ideas for future workshop goals. Although I tried to complete the reflective process shortly after the workshop took place, it was sometimes difficult to engage in self-reflection due to time constraints and job-related commitments. In addition to the reflection process, several of the workshop participants approached me afterward to discuss certain ideas or strategies further. These conversations with teachers also helped me to refine my thinking not only on the teaching of global education with middle years' students but also on the ways that I was approaching the workshops themselves. A summary of this reflective process follows.

My Reflective Analysis of the Workshops (prior to reading the literature on adult learning and professional development)

In order to summarize my reflective analysis of the teacher workshops, I have chosen to focus on five categories or components of the workshop process. These components include the goals of the workshop, the participants, the process, the content and the facilitator. Within each of these components, I have specified essential elements upon which to base my thinking. I derived these elements from a reflective process which included rereading my post-workshop notes and taking time to mull over the workshop outcomes. In examining my notes, I found that I could categorize various aspects of the workshops according to these significant elements. I

believe that these elements stand out in terms of their overall impact on the success of the workshops.

The Goals of the Workshops.

According to the strategic plan for our school, the goals regarding global education for grade 4 to 7 students were twofold. Firstly, we were striving to support intermediate students to develop a global perspective while improving their literacy skills. Secondly, I was identified in the strategic plan as being responsible for developing and facilitating a series of workshops for intermediate teachers on global education. These workshops were intended to support teachers in developing strategies to teach from a global perspective. These two goals were a part of our action plan for the 2010-2011 school year.

Element 1- Connections to teaching practice.

I have chosen to examine the appropriateness of the workshop goals in relation to their connections to teaching practice. Throughout the process of delivering the global education workshops, I had concerns about the value of the content for teachers. After all, I was asking them to give up four hours of their time, and therefore the exercise had to be of relevance for them. However, I questioned whether or not the workshop experiences were useful for the teacher participants. Some of my notes indicate that I was concerned about the teachers' level of engagement as I wondered "Are they not interested? Don't they care?" For several of the teachers who taught language arts and social studies, the workshops did provide new strategies that they could use with their students. However, several of the teachers did not teach language arts or global education. I attempted to make some connections from what they were learning to their classroom practice, but often these connections were weak and probably only helped me to justify the direction that I had chosen. For example, the art, French and music specialist teachers

could make connections to global themes by taking up topics with their students that involved celebrations of other cultures and countries. However, it was difficult for me to see how literacy connections could be made. I often felt that these teachers would be better served if they were able to follow a self-directed inquiry project that would relate more closely to questions that arose from their own teaching practice.

At times, I felt that the questions and activities that I was asking the teachers to engage in were too far removed from their daily teaching lives. I was asking the teachers to participate actively in the process of the workshops and yet, their active participation needed to be more closely linked to the reality of their work with students. The value of this approach was evident when I noticed a significant increase in participation during the third workshop when I asked the teachers to share how they fostered an appreciation for diversity in their lessons. In this way, they were able to make connections to strategies they already knew and augment their practice by sharing with colleagues.

The Participants

The participants in the workshops were teachers of Grades 4 to 7. Some of the teachers taught both language arts and social studies. Others taught specialist subjects such as music, French and art. These teachers were at various stages of their careers from first year teachers to those who have more than twenty years of classroom experience. They were a diverse group with an array of interests and personality types.

Element 2- Honouring the experience and knowledge of teachers.

Another aspect of the workshops which made me uncomfortable was that I was the person making the decisions regarding the topics and activities for study. As Junior School

principal, I hadn't questioned my authority to make these decisions until the very first workshop when I found myself sitting in front of seven tired teachers who were all looking at me and waiting for me to tell them what I knew. I was immediately unnerved because I realized that I hadn't taken the expertise of these teachers into account when I planned the workshop format. The way that I had set up the workshops with myself as presenter undermined the knowledge and experience that the teachers possessed. In analyzing this disconnect between my attitude toward the teachers and the workshop format, my initial thought was that I was following the familiar planning and delivery style I would employ with younger students. However, after further thought, I realized that I would not do this to children; it is disrespectful to them and to the reciprocal relationship between student and teacher. I subsequently tried to change the workshop format, but I found this to be a difficult shift to make. I think that both the teacher participants and I are used to the standard workshop format with an "expert" presenter at the front of the room and we had difficulty switching to a more interactive model. In addition, I had not planned for how I would pre-assess the teachers' knowledge, interests and needs so planning with these factors in mind was difficult. I was thinking about pre-assessment after the fact and it was difficult to go back at that point.

The Process

Historically, all teachers have been expected to attend the monthly early dismissal meetings. In preparing for these meetings, I did not consider altering this expectation in any way. In terms of the planning for the workshops, my goal was to provide strategies and ideas that teachers could use with their students immediately. In other words, I wanted to provide the answers for how they could roll out global education/literacy lessons in their classrooms. The

delivery of the workshops was directed by me, although I did make changes to my plans based on participation levels and feedback from the teachers.

Element 3- Environment.

When I consider the environment for the workshops, I am thinking about more than just the physical space of the classroom in which the workshops were presented. I am also considering the expectation that all teachers attend in one classroom, the time of day that the workshops were presented, and various other environmental influences.

The four workshops were held in the Grade 4 classroom. This space provided a fairly comfortable sitting area where the teachers and I could arrange chairs in a circular fashion. I ensured that refreshments were available for teachers and allowed time for some mingling and chat prior to getting the workshops started.

One disadvantage to using a classroom for the workshops was that students and parents also popped in for various reasons, which shifted the group's attention from the workshop activities. Ideally, a quiet space for uninterrupted professional development would allow teachers to focus on their own learning versus other demands.

Another concern is that all teachers are expected to attend the workshops and turn up in the same room at the same time. By expecting the teachers to attend the same workshop in the same location, the underlying message is that everyone's professional development needs can be met in the same way. Of course, this assumption is not true. All of the workshop participants are at different stages in their teaching careers. They have a wide range of teaching skills and areas of interest, and they are all unique individuals with varied learning styles. As I consider a model for professional development that would better suit these teachers, I believe that a variety of opportunities to engage in different types of professional development experiences would be

more effective. These varied opportunities might include inquiry groups, reflective writing, professional reading groups and online sharing and discussion.

In addition, the workshops were held on a Friday afternoon from 2:30 pm until 3:30 pm. It was often evident from the yawns and tired expressions that these teachers had put in a full week of teaching, marking, and extracurricular pursuits and they were not in any frame of mind to analyze questions around global education through literacy. I believe that creative solutions for ways to free up professional collaboration time will be crucial if teachers are to engage in effective professional development activities.

Element 4- Time.

One of the key issues with regard to the planning and implementation of the workshops was time constraints. Each of the four workshops was about one hour long if we were able to start on time. Unfortunately, we often started 10 to 15 minutes late because teachers had after school supervision duties or parents or students required a teacher's attention. It often seemed that we were rushing to get through the activities and meaningful discussions were sometimes cut short as we had run out of time.

These same time constraints made the planning of the workshops challenging. I knew that I needed to plan a workshop that could be completed in one hour. There was no opportunity for teachers to engage in more in-depth projects or discussions as the time lapses in between the workshops made it difficult to maintain continuity. Often when we met, the participants had difficulty remembering what we had done in the previous workshop because of the weeks or in some cases, months in between.

Element 5- Differentiation.

I think that the workshops generally focused on a single topic delivered through one workshop session. I did not make enough of an effort to consider the varying needs and interests of the teachers. I don't believe that teachers could see the connections from the material that I was presenting to their classroom needs. For future professional development sessions, I would like to explore a more differentiated approach to professional development. I would like to build in some level of flexibility so that teachers can explore topics that are important to their students and their classrooms. I would also like to differentiate the ways that professional development can take place. Collaborative groups exploring a topic of mutual interest, professional book study groups or reflective writing are all possibilities.

The Content

The resources and activities for the workshops were taken from my own reading and research into literacy and global education. I chose resources that I believed would support reading and writing achievement with intermediate students. The activities that I planned were chosen to engage the teachers in active participation.

Element 6- Resources and Activities.

My resource choices consisted of professional articles and trade books which highlighted global education opportunities through literacy for middle years' students. I also chose to share books intended for use with students. These books included several titles from the Notable Books for a Global Society list (International Reading Association, various years). Many of the choices were picture books with themes of resiliency of the human spirit, celebrating people and places and cultural heritage. I purposefully chose picture books as I wanted to share ideas for their use with middle years' students. The resources that I shared with the teachers included:

Teacher Professional Articles and Books:

Ayers, W. (2004). *Teaching toward freedom: Moral commitment and ethical action in the classroom*. Boston: Beacon Press.

- Ayers' book invites teachers to consider different interpretations of education. These interpretations include indoctrination according to various authoritarian influences and Ayers' preferred model which invites teachers and students to become more enlightened while moving all people toward freedom.

Christensen, L. (2000). *Reading, writing and rising up: Teaching about social justice and the power of the written word*. Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools Press.

- Throughout this book, Christensen describes her efforts to teach students to think critically and to use literature and writing to develop self-knowledge. This book is full of wonderful teaching strategies which support teaching from a socially just perspective.

Wilhelm, J. D. (2010). Diversity brings vitality: Lessons from international literacy. *Voices from the Middle*, 18(1), 35-38.

- In this article, Wilhelm touches on the richness that multiple perspectives bring to a society. He also discusses the relationship between language and culture and varying cultural attitudes toward literacy.

Notable Books for a Global Society Resources:

Coy, J. (1999). *Strong to the hoop*. New York: Lee & Low.

- This book is beautifully illustrated and tells the story of a boy, James, who wants to impress the older boys with his basketball skills. The story focuses on James' determination to achieve his goals.

Diakit , B.W. (1999). *The hatseller and the monkeys*. New York: Scholastic.

- This story is based upon an African folktale. It describes the dilemma of a hatseller who encounters some mischievous monkeys.

Hamanaka, S. (1999). *All the colors of the Earth*. New York: Scholastic.

- This book is a richly illustrated celebration of children. Instead of children being referred to as black or white, they are described in terms of tinkling pinks and roaring browns.

Look, L. (1999). *Love as strong as ginger*. New York: Atheneum.

- This book tells the story of a little girl who develops a greater appreciation for her immigrant Chinese grandmother after she accompanies her grandmother to work at a cannery.

Say, A. (1999). *Tea with milk*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

- This story is an exploration of cultural differences particularly of those who straddle more than one culture. Japanese and North American customs are explored.

For the most part, I was pleased with how these resource choices were received by the teacher participants. I think that the professional journal article by Wilhelm (2010) was particularly well-received and provided food for thought. I did note that some teachers were hesitant to participate in the discussion of this article and I can only surmise that they needed more time to think about their reading or they did not find it applicable to their teaching. I have followed up by purchasing subscriptions to two professional journals intended for middle years' teachers of language arts (*Voices from the Middle* and *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*). The student resources also sparked conversations around how they could be used in a language arts or social studies class. I believe that one of the reasons the resources were well-received was

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that they were new to this group of teachers. The resources were a source of inspiration and fresh ideas. Some of the teachers could see the potential for using these resources in their classrooms.

The activities that the teachers participated in were sometimes successful and sometimes not. The initial workshop involved reading a short journal article and a brief discussion. Although some of the teachers participated readily in this process, others were more reluctant to engage. Subsequently, the next two workshops involved activities where the teachers could participate more actively. For example, one workshop involved a sorting activity on the topic of global education. This activity sparked interesting discussion and debate over categories and choices. Another workshop provided an opportunity for the teachers to do some reflective writing. To my surprise, this activity was met with interest and involved participation. I believe that these activities were more successful than the reading and discussion format because teachers could participate actively, classroom connections could be made and they allowed for fun, sharing and laughter with colleagues.

The Facilitator

In addition to the above criteria which I have used to analyze the workshops themselves, I will also analyze my role as a facilitator. I will analyze my role in terms of preparedness and my knowledge of adult learning and effective professional development.

Element 7- Preparedness.

In terms of my preparedness for the workshop sessions, I feel that my planning was adequate in some ways. Prior to the workshops, I ensured that I chose books and articles that I thought would be of interest to the teachers. I also prepared an agenda so that the participants knew what the goals were for the session. I was prepared for the workshop sessions with all materials and resources at hand. What I had failed to take into account was the interests and

needs of my learners. I was driven by the goals of the school's strategic plan and I focused on content. However, instead of making the strategic goals fit the context of the school, I tried to make the learners fit the strategic plan.

Element 8- Knowledge of Adult Learning.

Prior to the workshop sessions, my knowledge of adult learning was minimal. I assumed that I could run the workshops like I would run a classroom full of middle years' students. Throughout the process, I had a sense that I was not reaching the teacher participants the way that I would like to, but I was not sure how to change. Subsequently, my research into adult learning, literacy coaching and effective professional development practices has given me insight into how I will change professional development for teachers in the future.

Element 9- Knowledge of Effective Professional Development.

My knowledge of professional development during the time period of the workshops was based on the type of professional development that I had experienced throughout my teaching career. Most of my professional development experiences followed a familiar pattern. This pattern involved an expert presenter who would run the workshop from the front of the room. Sometimes there would be opportunities for teachers to share ideas or discuss common challenges, but often we looked to the presenter for the magic answer to all of our teaching concerns. I believe that I prepared the global education/literacy workshops with this format in mind. I was the presenter who would provide the answers. Although I was not comfortable with that role, I was not sure how to make changes. I am hopeful that my research into effective professional development including the role of literacy coaches will help me to gain a broader perspective on other ways of engaging teachers in professional development experiences.

Element 10- Teacher-Facilitator Relationship.

I believe that my relationship with the teachers provided a strong foundation for the workshops. I have worked with many of the teachers for several years and have developed positive and supportive relationships with them. In my opinion, these positive and supportive relationships helped to create an atmosphere where teachers felt that they could be open to ideas. I also believe that the teachers were tolerant of my efforts particularly considering that I had not conducted ongoing professional development workshops with them before. However, I also believe that in the future, they will be expecting more from me and may not be as tolerant. In addition, I want to provide effective professional development opportunities which will support their learning and their students' learning.

Analysis of the Workshops in Light of the Literature on Adult Education and Professional Development

In this section, I will analyze the workshops in light of the literature on adult learning theory and professional development. In addition, I will analyze the effect that the intermediate global education through literacy classes had on classroom instruction. In this way, I will make connections between the research on global education and the research on effective professional development practices. By comparing the impact of the workshops with the impact of the global education through literacy classes, I advocate for a coaching approach to professional development with regard to global education and literacy.

In my research on professional development and adult learning, I found that many of the elements that I considered to be important to the success of the workshops are also referred to in the literature as being significant. My initial analysis of the workshops provided me with an

opportunity to distill significant elements from my reflective notes. The elements that I derived are: 1. connections to teaching practice, 2. honouring the experience and knowledge of teachers, 3. the environment, 4. time, 5. differentiation, 6. resources and activities, 7. preparedness, 8. knowledge of adult learning, 9. knowledge of effective professional development, and 10. relationship between the teacher and the facilitator.

There are many interpretations of what constitutes effective professional development and probably one's understanding of best practices in teacher professional development is closely related to personal learning styles, current classroom demands and interests. However, I believe that most teachers would agree that professional development is effective when it results in new skills or strategies that can be put to work in the classroom. Numerous professional articles also refer to effective professional development as that which impacts teacher beliefs and attitudes and results in greater support for students (Blamey, Meyer & Walpole, 2009; Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Terehoff, 2002).

In analyzing the workshops in relation to the professional literature, I began by looking at existing models or examples of effective professional development experiences for teachers. Therefore, I have chosen to examine the workshops in relation to the work of Terehoff (2002) and Trotter (2006) who study elements of adult learning theory in professional development, literacy coaching models (Shanklin, 2007; Stover, Kissel, Haag & Shoniker, 2011) and a differentiated model of professional development (Kose, 2007).

Analysis of the Workshops in Relation to Adult Learning Theory

Terehoff (2002) makes connections between the essential elements of adult learning and teacher professional development. She suggests that in a school setting, principals often take on the role of adult educator and thus take responsibility for staff development. I assumed the role

of adult educator for the global education workshops this past school year. Although I was enthusiastic about the topic of global education, I was not knowledgeable about many important aspects of adult education theory. Terehoff notes that it is essential for adult educators to understand that adult learners are different from student learners. She notes that the major distinctions are adults' self-concept, experience, readiness to learn and orientation to learning.

Adults' self-concept.

Terehoff (2002) explains that as people mature, they see themselves as increasingly self-directed in their lives and in their learning. She recommends that principals create an atmosphere of self-directedness in professional development in which teachers can develop "the capacity for self-direction within the mission and goals of the school" (p. 67). Clearly, I did not foster an atmosphere which was conducive to self-directedness in professional development. I made the majority of the decisions regarding the topics, resources and activities. Teachers knew that they had to attend the workshops and that no alternatives were planned. This lack of choice does not support teachers' self-concepts as adults or self-directed learners.

The role of experience in adult learners.

Both Terehoff (2002) and Trotter (2006) note the importance of the adult learner's experience and knowledge. Terehoff suggests that principals should recognize teachers' professional knowledge as it represents a "long-term investment in their self-image" (p. 67). In examining the global education workshops, I realize that I should have allowed more time to acknowledge how teachers were implementing global themes with their students. In this way, I would have invited them into a process of sharing expertise and building on what they already know. By providing teachers with opportunities to share their knowledge, I believe that they would have been more actively engaged in the workshop process.

Readiness to learn in adults.

Terehoff (2002) defines adult readiness to learn in terms of the importance of sequencing topics according to the needs and interests of the learner. She recommends that principals be aware of the interests and learning needs of teachers. Creating groupings of teachers according to similar interests or needs may be preferable. The global education workshops did not cater to distinct learner needs or interests. Upon reflection, it is clear that I should have created groupings of teachers according to various interests, classroom needs, subject areas or teaching experience.

Orientation to learning.

Terehoff (2002) and Trotter (2006) both refer to teachers wanting learning experiences that connect to classroom needs. This desire for immediately useful learning is the adult learners' orientation to learning. Often, this orientation is related to a particular problem or area of challenge for the teacher. A principal can help teachers to identify problems to be solved and assist the teacher in finding solutions. I did not find that classroom-related problems surfaced to any significant degree in the workshops. Quite possibly these concerns did not arise because the workshops were not oriented towards problem-solving from the start. Or perhaps teachers were not comfortable sharing their concerns with an administrator or with the larger group. In the future, I believe that I would look to teachers' yearly individual growth plans as a way of identifying goals for learning. These professional goals would then be personalized to the teacher and their classroom needs.

In addition to the elements of adult learning, Terehoff (2002) outlines several principles of adult learning which will impact the learning experience. These principles are related to the environment for learning, mutual planning, needs and interests, goals and objectives, program

design, implementation and evaluation. For the purposes of this analysis, I will briefly examine the global education workshops in light of these principles.

Environment for learning.

Terehoff (2002) notes the importance of a relaxed and comfortable environment for the learning process. This environment includes the adult educator's attitude toward the learners and the content material. As I mentioned in my initial analysis, I believe that that the environment for the workshops was comfortable and conducive to positive learning experiences. I also believe that I conveyed a positive attitude toward the learners which was supported by my previous relationship with them. In addition, I was enthusiastic about global education. In my opinion, these qualities supported teachers in their learning.

Mutual planning.

As I noted in my initial analysis, the teachers were not a part of the planning process for the workshops. Terehoff (2002) notes that teachers are more likely to participate in learning activities they helped create or select. I believe that the global education professional development could have been more successful if teachers had had a role to play in the planning.

Needs and interests.

Terehoff (2002) points out that principals can help to create a secure and nurturing school environment if they are aware of the needs and interests of their teachers. By initiating learning activities which build on these interests and needs, they further support a positive environment. With regard to the global education workshops, I looked to the school's strategic plan in setting a direction for professional development and not to teacher needs. In hindsight, I could have tailored the workshops more to the needs and interests of the teachers by providing them with learning choices within the area of global education and literacy.

Goals and objectives.

Terehoff (2002) advises that the overall goals and objectives of professional learning should be connected to the overall goal and mission of the school, needs and interests of participants (as noted above) and clear objectives. Although the workshops were connected to the overall goals of the school, specific objectives would have assisted me in evaluating whether or not teachers were able to apply the strategies to their classroom practice.

Program design.

Adult learning principles advocate for a learner-centered program design. My focus was on global education themes and not on the knowledge, needs or interests of the learner. I did provide a range of activities and resources within the program. However, more awareness of teachers' needs and interests within the restrictions of school goals would help administrators to provide a more balanced approach to professional development.

Implementation and evaluation.

In implementing the workshops, I believe that I portrayed enthusiasm and interest for the participants and topics. Terehoff (2002) recommends that the principal take on the role of co-inquirer or resource person. In the global education workshops, I tried to take on the role of co-inquirer, but I did find that it was sometimes difficult to move outside of the role of "expert". Terehoff also recommends that evaluation of learning is important. By evaluating the extent to which learning has taken place, future goals can be set. I did not complete a formal evaluation of the success of the workshops. For future professional development sessions, I would plan for a self-assessment phase or teacher feedback to gauge the extent of the learning.

Analysis of the Workshops in Relation to Literacy Coaching

I have chosen to analyze the global education workshops in relation to the literature on literacy coaching because in many respects the role that I wanted to take on was that of a guide or coach. I was trying to share new strategies and ideas with teachers to support their teaching of global education through literacy. However, for various reasons which I have outlined, I took on the role of “expert” in contrast to that of “guide”.

Showers and Joyce (1996) provided an overview of the evolution of peer coaching since the 1980s. In addition, they cite the success of coaching models in the actual classroom implementation of professional learning. Other literacy experts note that whereas a workshop approach resulted in fewer than 10% of teachers implementing new instructional strategies, a coaching approach resulted in most teachers adding the new strategies to their instruction (Robinson, Egawa, Buly, & Coskie, 2005).

Although my goal was to act as a guide or coach in the context of the global education workshops, in retrospect I realize that I took on the role of the expert. I had decided on a particular set of strategies and topics that would be covered and I expected that the teachers would implement them. I did not provide specific in-classroom follow-up which would have supported the teachers in the implementation of the strategies.

As I mentioned in my initial analysis, at the same time that I was delivering the workshops, I was also teaching global education in each intermediate classroom one class per week. The expectation was that the teacher would remain in the classroom during the class. During these classes, I made a conscious effort to teach using a wide range of strategies that would support literacy outcomes as well as global education themes. Interestingly enough, although I did not know it then, I was acting as a guide. The teachers and I informally chatted

about the lesson before I taught if there was time. I taught the lesson and they observed in an informal way. Afterwards, we often had time for a brief conversation about the lesson, a particular student's reactions, or an assessment strategy I had chosen. On occasion, teachers would tell me that they had tried something similar to what I had done or were planning on revamping the strategy further to make it work for a particular class or unit. These lessons and interactions were where the real professional development was happening.

The literature on global education suggests that teachers do not feel prepared or supported to teach global education themes. Mundy and Manion (2008) reported that Canadian elementary school teachers believed that little support in the form of professional development for global education was available to them. In addition, they found that district and provincial level support or guidance for global education was lacking. Davies (2006) also noted that teachers lack confidence in teaching controversial global themes. Merryfield (2000) found that little focus was placed on global education themes in teacher preparation programs. These studies indicate that teachers would benefit from professional development initiatives supportive of a global perspective.

In my experience working as both an "expert" during the workshops and as a "guide" in the classroom, I found that the teachers were more receptive to implementing new strategies and ideas as a result of the guided approach. This approach can be tailored to the needs of the teacher by differentiating the coaching (Stover, Kissel, Haag, & Shoniker, 2011). In this way, the needs and interests of the teacher are taken into account. Furthermore, this form of professional development is ongoing and very much connected to student needs.

In reflecting on this informal coaching process, I am reminded of the work of Shanklin (2007) who refers to a series of steps for working with a literacy coach. These steps are easy to

implement and, according to Shanklin, will improve the coaching experience. Firstly, she recommends that it is essential to foster “a reciprocal relationship of trust” between the coach and teacher (p. 44). In addition, she sets out a program of preconference, in-classroom coaching observation, debriefing and follow-through. Essentially, I followed Shanklin’s steps during the global education classes that I was teaching. It would have been very difficult to engage in this level of one-on-one or small group work with each teacher during the workshops. However, this type of supportive and collegial work happened informally during the global education classes and related conversations with teachers.

I believe that a coaching model such as the one offered by Shanklin (2007) could provide a more significant support for global education through literacy than does the workshop approach. The coaching model would allow the teachers and I to engage in an ongoing process of teaching and reflection completely connected to their individual classrooms. In addition, this coaching approach would allow for differentiated professional development according to student and teacher learning needs.

An Analysis of the Workshops in Relation to Differentiated Professional Development

One model of professional development which I find appealing is outlined by Kose (2007). He provides a framework implemented by a middle school principal which enables her to differentiate professional development for her teachers. She begins by thinking of professional development in terms of whole school (the core understandings that are essential for all teachers), small group (for specialist teachers and teachers with a particular area of interest) and individualized (to support individual teacher interests or needs). The principal found that this type of structure allowed her to organize professional development for a variety of needs and interests while meeting requirements for broader goals and objectives.

According to Kose (2007), whole school professional development referred to learning related to school vision, school programming and professional development initiatives which support these goals. Group learning involved subject area and specialist teams and mentor groups. Individual learning included one-on-one conversations, self-selected professional development days, and strategic hiring and placement of specialists.

I was very impressed by this particular principal's approach as outlined by Kose (2007). It is dynamic and allows for differentiation for individual teachers. Teacher experience and knowledge are seen as a resource particularly for mentor and specialist groups. There is a place and time for assessment of learning needs. These student and teacher learning needs are then linked to the school vision and goals.

In reflecting upon my workshops, there are a number of differences between this dynamic model and my approach. One of the most significant differences is that the workshops were not connected to other forms of professional development. Although they were part of the strategic plan, there was a disconnect between the workshops and other professional development initiatives at the school. Instead of being a part of the fabric of the school's professional development plan, it seemed very much like they were occurring in isolation. Additionally, they were not differentiated to meet the learning needs or interests of the teachers. Several of the teachers were specialist area teachers and did not teach language arts or social studies. Their needs would have been better served through a small group or self-directed professional development initiative.

Although the global education workshops fell short of my goals, there were several positive outcomes. Most importantly, I have learned a great deal about what not to do. There is no greater teacher than experience and sometimes lackluster results can yield great learning

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opportunities. I have also discovered my love for coaching teachers. By working with the teachers as a guide, I enjoyed the reciprocal learning that we shared. In the future, I would very much like to continue with this type of coaching work.

Chapter 4 -- Moving Forward: Future Professional Development Plans

In response to my research for this project and my own reflections on the global education workshops, my goal is to develop a comprehensive, differentiated and ongoing plan for professional development at my school. A part of this plan will focus on global education through literacy. My initial attempt to plan and implement the global education through literacy workshops was somewhat successful but did not deliver the kind of results that I had hoped for. As a result of my research into global education through literacy, I knew that literacy projects had the potential to bring to light many global themes such as appreciation of diversity and celebration of heritage. However, the workshops had not been embraced by teachers. Specifically, I was concerned that the workshops made little impact on teachers' instructional practices and therefore had little impact on student learning. Despite my disappointment in the success of the workshops, I was motivated to create something better.

My research into adult learning and professional development has provided me with a great deal of insight into how teachers learn and the kinds of conditions that make this learning more successful and more likely to be implemented in the classroom. I am now aware that in order for professional development to be successful, elements of adult learning theory must be considered (Terehoff, 2002; Trotter, 2006). The elements of adult learning that I have attempted to address in my plan are self-directedness of the teacher-learner, differentiation of professional development (according to experience, interests, readiness to learn, and orientation to learning), environment (including both physical and psychological elements), mutual planning of professional development, and evaluation. In addition to these elements, I have taken into account the school's mission and vision, student learning data and overall school goals.

Professional Development Plan for 2011-2012

In order to differentiate professional development in a systematic way, I have decided to refer to the framework outlined by Kose (2007). This framework begins with professional development planning being classified into whole school, small group and individualized categories. My underlying assumptions are that whole school professional development will be implemented for learning that all staff should know. These whole school goals are highlighted in the school's strategic plan for the coming year. Small group learning will include specialist teams, core subject teams and groups with common interests. Individualized learning and support will take place through one-on-one conversations, mentoring and coaching, teacher growth plans, and support for self-directed professional development. Although some of the teams and groupings existed in previous years, I have attempted to define this professional development design further, particularly for Junior School teachers.

A differentiated approach.

Whole school professional development

All-staff meetings.

The purpose of all-staff meetings with regard to professional development is to communicate the school's overall goals for the school year. In addition, it is important that new and returning staff are aware of the school's vision and mission. Although long-time teachers have had input into shaping the vision and mission statements of the school, newer members of the staff do not share this awareness. The vision and mission of the school are communicated to the extended community through meetings, handbooks, the school's website and various other exchanges. These all-staff meetings take place once per term. The Senior and Junior School

principals include team-building and motivating activities and try to build enthusiasm for school initiatives.

Technology proficiency.

Proficiency with technology has been identified in the school's strategic plan as an ongoing goal for all faculty members. At the start of the school year, teachers are asked to complete an assessment of their comfort level with technology as a part of their growth plan. These self-assessments are reviewed during individual meetings with the Senior and Junior School principals. As a result of these assessments, learning sessions and supports are planned. These learning sessions and supports may take the form of mentorship with more experienced technology users. Strategic hiring of technologically-proficient teachers who can act as mentors is an important part of this approach.

Assessment for Learning.

Assessment for learning has been an ongoing initiative for three years. Teachers have attended professional development workshops and have been provided with professional books on this topic. At this point, assessment for learning has become embedded as an assessment method for most teachers. However, we will revisit this topic from time to time at all-staff meetings.

Small group professional development

Junior Faculty meetings.

Junior Faculty meetings take place once per month. Although much of these meetings is devoted to day-to-day planning, a portion of each meeting is to be set aside for professional development. The professional development topics during these meetings should be relevant for all members of the Junior School staff and as a result are often derived from whole school

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initiatives (a mini-lesson on an online resource, sharing an assessment for learning tool useful to all). In order to facilitate mutual planning, the Junior School principal will elicit teacher feedback with regard to interests and needs for these professional development sessions. Additionally, an atmosphere of collegiality and respect will be cultivated.

Educational leadership team.

This team, which consists of the Junior and Senior School principals, department heads, and coordinators, has a key role to play in mutual decision-making and planning for the whole school. These ELT meetings are held once per month and enable us to develop a cohesive approach to school issues, support members of the team, share leadership and plan in a coordinated fashion. The ELT team members have participated in targeted professional development initiatives such as leadership and communication skills workshops. As a result of these workshops, the ELT team members will be coaching teachers on specific communication tools during the coming school year.

Middle Years Team.

The Middle Years Team is a new team which is comprised of the Junior and Senior School principals, teachers of Grade 6 through 9, the school counselor, the school librarian and the Middle Years Coordinator. Through a collaborative approach, we are in the process of researching best practices in middle years, contacting experts for guidance, and working together on a “change project” as directed by the Senior School principal. There is a definite spirit of shared responsibility and collegiality in this team.

Core Subject Teams.

The core subject teachers (teachers of language arts, math, science, and social studies) meet once per month after early dismissal. The plan for these meetings for the coming year is

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based upon teacher feedback and expressions of interest and student achievement data. As a result of this feedback and data, the core teachers wish to investigate how to improve student achievement in writing. The primary and intermediate coordinators will organize and plan these meetings in conjunction with the Junior School principal. The Junior School principal will attend as a co-inquirer and will also support the group by facilitating an online book club related to this team's area of interest.

Various Specialist Teacher Groups (Fine Arts, Science and Technology)

Specialist teacher groups will meet in teams on a monthly basis. Several of these teachers who do not readily correspond to a specialist team (Junior School French, PE and resource room teachers) have expressed interest in working on a self-directed learning project according to their growth plan goals. These teachers will work on these self-directed projects on the early dismissal days and will report to the Junior School principal with their progress.

*Individualized professional development**One-on-One Conversations.*

Teachers are encouraged to participate in one-on-one conversations with the Junior and Senior School principals regarding a variety of topics including teaching, students and parents. In this way, teachers and the principals can develop supportive and caring relationships which will foster teacher learning. Additionally, the principals try to visit all classrooms in their respective schools on a regular basis. These visits provide opportunities to gain insight into student learning and teaching approaches. They also help to reduce stress levels for teachers when they are observed formally.

Mentoring and Coaching.

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New teachers to the school are teamed with a mentor teacher at the start of the school year. The mentors and mentees meet weekly during the first term to establish a collaborative learning relationship. The principals provide the mentor with coffee cards to encourage relaxed off-campus meetings and conversation. These types of mentoring relationships acknowledge the expertise of the more experienced teacher as well as the enthusiasm and fresh ideas of the new teacher.

Informal coaching has existed in the past in the form of teachers helping teachers with shared resources and informal conversations. During the coming school year, I would like to build on this informal model by acting in a coaching capacity to advance the teaching of global education through literacy. As the Grade 4 to 7 teachers are interested in improving student achievement in writing, I will suggest that we focus on literacy strategies that support writing. Mutual planning and recognition of teacher expertise as a resource are key features of this process. (Refer to page 67 for details of this coaching model.)

Teacher Growth Plans.

Teacher growth plans have been in place at the school for many years. These growth plans enable the teacher to be self-directed in their learning according to their interests and needs. The growth plans are completed by the teacher early on in the school year. Teachers have an opportunity to discuss their growth plan with the principal who is charged with offering support and specific suggestions. This meeting is an ideal time to make suggestions with regard to specific professional development workshops or professional books that the teacher may wish to read. Teacher growth plans are revisited throughout the year and may provide a basis for the development of learning teams with similar interests. At the end of the year, teachers are asked to

reflect on their growth through the year and prepare a self-assessment which is shared with the principals.

Support for Self-Directed Professional Development.

Throughout the year, teachers can apply to receive funding for professional development workshops outside of the school. This support, both financial and philosophical, for self-directed professional development, enables teachers to work on particular interests or needs in relation to their teaching situation.

Fig 2. Coaching Model to Support Global Education through Literacy

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| September 2011 | Survey teachers of language arts and social studies to learn their areas of interest and need in global education through literacy |
| Early October 2011 | One-on-one or small group conversations with teachers to mutually plan the coaching lessons. Consider language arts strategies, potential to include writing focus, connections to global education, needs of students, needs of teachers |
| Mid to Late October 2011 | Collaborative planning for 2 coaching lessons (between coach and teacher or in small groups) |
| November 2011 | Implement coaching model outlined by Shanklin (2007) for the 2 lessons: Step 1- Preconference with the teacher During this step, the teacher and I will meet to discuss the strategy that we will be implementing during the lesson. We will discuss the needs of the students, the goals of the lesson and perhaps make changes to the lesson plan. Step 2- In-classroom coaching observation |

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| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| | <p>During the in-classroom observation, we will take turns observing and providing feedback. The feedback can focus on specific aspects of the lesson that have been identified for observation, student reactions to the lesson, key questions, and perhaps some suggestions or extensions of the lesson.</p> <p>Step 3- Debriefing</p> <p>During the debriefing, the teacher and I will have an opportunity to discuss the lesson and provide feedback. Reflection and mutual problem-solving are the goals.</p> |
| <p>December 2011</p> | <p>Step 4- Follow-up</p> <p>There may be a need for follow-up work to take place after the debriefing. This follow-up work may include investigation of strategies, follow-up work with the students, or a search for additional resources. Ongoing discussions and planning may be a result of the follow-up work.</p> |

Summary

I believe that this design for professional development takes into account the elements of adult learning. For example, the design is differentiated in order to provide a range of opportunities for teachers to follow professional development that addresses their learning needs and interests. There are multiple connections to learning that is classroom-related. There are opportunities for teachers to work on self-directed inquiry as a result of their growth plans. Cohesiveness exists as a result of the whole school, small group and individualized professional development being planned as part of a larger roadmap for the year. The environment is taken

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into account with regard to both physical comfort and psychological elements. I believe that this professional development plan, including as it does the coaching approach to global education through literacy, will provide a more inspiring and effective professional development experience for teachers.

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Chapter 5 -- Looking Back: Reflecting on my Learning

The process of completing this project has provided me with learning opportunities, both personal and professional. I believe that I have grown not only with regard to global education, adult learning and professional development, but also in terms of how I view myself as a teacher and principal. This project has been an integral piece of a larger learning experience connected to my daily working life. Completing my Masters' project and my first year as Junior School principal was at times overwhelming. I was often pushed way out of my comfort zone and spent many sleepless nights thinking about school issues including my responsibilities for staff development. However, this learning experience has been profound.

While researching the literature on adult education, I came across material on transformative learning. According to the literature, transformative learning involves "what could be termed personality changes or changes in the organization of the self" (Illeris, 2009, p. 142). Transformative learning thus involves changes which become a part of the person. When I read about this type of learning, I immediately related this to my experiences this past year both through this project and through my work life. The challenges of this project, which are deeply related to my work, have had a significant impact on how I see myself as a teacher, a principal, a colleague and as a professional in the field of education.

Specifically, with regard to professional development, I realize now that I had a very narrow view of what constituted professional development. When I first began to read about adult learning and professional development, I actually felt embarrassed about the workshops that I had designed. I realized that I had delivered the content, but I had forgotten the central role that the teachers played in the process. I would never make this mistake with younger students. Why had I forgotten when it came to teaching teachers? I am still not sure of the answer to this

question, but I think it has something to do with the models of professional development that I had long been exposed to. The fact that the teachers were so tolerant of my approach only makes me appreciate them and the work they do all the more.

With regard to teaching teachers, I realize that despite the mistakes I made in delivering the workshops, I enjoy working with teachers as learners. The experience of talking about teaching was thoroughly enjoyable, and even though I did not cause the transformations in practice that I had hoped for, we still gained new perspectives through our discussions. Talking about teaching with other teachers is a professional development journey in and of itself. Sharing ideas, talking about what works and what doesn't, relaying stories about student successes, and building on ideas are exciting and inspiring processes and I look forward to having more of these kinds of interactions in the future.

The process of keeping a reflective journal after the workshops has given me a new appreciation for the importance of reflective practice. Throughout my teaching life, I had always meant to keep a written journal in order to reflect on my daily teaching and to plan for future changes. However, I never managed to commit to a reflective journal over the long term. As a result of this project, I finally kept a journal over the course of a school year. As a result of the journal, I believe that I was able to reflect on the workshops in a detailed and thoughtful way. I found the journal and the notes in it somehow comforting. It was as if the weighty questions were not quite as weighty when I saw them in black and white. Also, I could jot down possible or partial answers when they came to me. Patterns emerged when I reread my journal or as I added new notes. This reflective activity is outlined by Moore and Whitfield (2008) as they invite teachers to engage in a thorough process of reflection. They argue that this process will assist teachers in improving their teaching skills. I would suggest that a useful tool in this process

is a simple journal where thoughts can be jotted down in the moment. Although I kept a computer journal and a written journal, I found that the written journal was easily accessible so I used it more frequently. I will definitely keep a written journal this coming school year. Also, in September, I plan on giving each of the Junior teachers a small journal within which to write down their reflections as a part of their own professional development.

I have found the process of working on this project to be an enjoyable one. I enjoyed researching articles, reading for a purpose, and making connections to the daily life of my school. At times, the process of looking for professional articles seemed like looking for an elusive treasure, but it was so fulfilling to find the right resource. I have enjoyed the moments of inspiration when several articles and ideas came together through interesting connections. I have also enjoyed the writing process. I have learned that when I have no sense of which direction to take with my writing, I should just start to write. It will come together somehow and ultimately through this process, I am reminded of how difficult writing can be for our students. The writing process has helped to shape my thinking and, I believe that seeing the words, doodles and diagrams in black and white are extremely helpful to the thinking process.

Through my research on professional development, one article which invites teachers to consider writing for a larger audience caught my attention. Whitney (2009) makes connections between professional development and the reasons that teachers write for publication. She suggests that teachers write as a form of reflective practice in which the teacher seeks to share professional work with a wider audience. In this way, the teacher reaches out beyond the confines of the classroom and becomes a part of a larger professional discussion. In the future, I would like to be a part of that discussion and make steps toward writing for publication. The notion of writing for publication was definitely not something that I would have considered prior

to this Masters' program, but this new interest reminds me of the transformative potential of learning.

Lastly, the experience of searching for literacy materials that support global education themes has opened my eyes to an amazing wealth of resources. Prior to this project, I was not aware of the Notable Books for a Global Society list. I have shared this list with our school librarian and I am happy to say that many of these books are now on our school library shelves. The reactions of students to these books and to literacy strategies which support global education themes have been overwhelmingly positive. Parents who were involved in the home-school global education reading unit have also commented to me on the richness of this literature. These experiences have reminded me of the power of reading and writing to uplift and enlighten. I have also been inspired by the writing of Linda Christensen and look forward to including her work in my future professional development experiences.

As a result of the learning that I have experienced through this project, particularly as it relates to my professional life, I have become a more self-reliant and self-directed learner. I am far more confident about taking on new challenges even if the challenge pushes me into unfamiliar areas. I am confident that regardless of what I am asked to learn, I can find a way of approaching the learning that will work for me. Although, there have been many moments during the process of completing this project that I had no clear conceptualization of the end result, I realized that the best approach was to just keep going. Through reflection, reading, asking questions, and seeking help when needed, answers - and new questions - will come.

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