When we conceived of this book, we had a clear vision about how digital technologies can transform the lives of children, the work of teachers, and the face of pedagogy. We felt strongly that mobile technologies offer powerful tools to change how we engage in the work of teaching and learning, and how we can offer learners opportunities to share more purposefully in their own education. We felt strongly that the ideals of progressive pedagogy aligned with the affordances offered by mobile technologies and that the confluence of mobile technologies and progressive pedagogy could lead to schooling contexts that empowered and engaged the learner, transforming the lives of students and the communities around them. In particular, we had a vision for how mobile technologies allow for the inclusion of all students in the learning process, including those historically marginalized by the established systems of schooling.

Teachers are positioned now more than ever to capitalize on the models of critical and constructivist pedagogies first given voice in the works of educational theorists such as Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, Bruner, and Piaget. Progressive pedagogies vary in practice by movement and by underlying philosophy. However, progressive pedagogies hold some underlying practices as foundational: including students as active participants in the curriculum who learn by doing, student collaboration, student voice and choice, teachers as facilitators, curriculum influenced by student needs and interests, curriculum that is personalized and differentiated, a focus on conceptual learning, and assessment that is formative and includes alternative forms (Brooks & Brooks, 2001; Hayes, 2006).

In addition, progressive pedagogy models often draw on the community as a resource with students going out into the community and community members coming into the classroom. These models often include service-learning projects featuring pragmatic and experiential projects curriculum with connections to real-life issues and events. For these reasons, many models of progressive pedagogy focus on social responsibility, social activism, social justice, and democratic education (Freire, 1998; Giroux, 2010; Shor, 1980).
The presence of mobile technologies support students and teachers as they engage with progressive models in the classroom. Mobile technologies allow learners to take an active role in learning. Learners can connect with information and people through their devices. They can engage in targeted research as they curate information around authentic, relevant topics and capitalize on their own needs, wants, and interests. They can create original products showcasing the power of student voice and choice. Using mobile technologies, teachers are encouraged to shift away from didactic models and turn to designing and facilitating powerful project- and problem-based curriculum to engage and empower learners in the classroom.

We argue here as well that progressive models naturally include and lift those learners who are often excluded by traditional schooling practices and contexts. In stark contrast to test-driven classrooms focused on performance of discrete skills and regurgitation of facts, classrooms tapping into progressive ideals and powered by mobile technology provide all individuals equal opportunities to learn. In classrooms guided by these principles, teachers promote active student construction of knowledge, supported by formative assessment and differentiated instruction that asks students to use both convergent and divergent thinking (Hall, Meyer, & Rose, 2012). Mobile technologies coupled with progressive pedagogical models support the growth and development of all learners in the classroom. Teacher can use mobile technologies to help learners overcome barriers that interfere with a student’s ability to engage in learning and to shift the focus in the learning to increasing student access to rich, engaging classroom experiences (Glass, Meyer, & Rose, 2013; Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014).

Put simply, the confluence of mobile technologies and progressive pedagogies empowers learners and acknowledges and honors the variance inherent in human learning. This approach provides the learner with a range of options for making meaning of the world that values multiple perspectives and connections and habits of thinking, allowing, in turn, students to do well both in and outside of school (Eisner, 2001).

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF THIS BOOK**

The ideals underpinning this book are powerful. However, we must acknowledge educators are still in the early stages of realizing the potential of mobile technologies in teaching and learning contexts. Many educators are beginning to dabble in technology integration using mobile devices, and we applaud their work as they being to build personal models for empowering learners through curriculum supported by mobile devices. For example, those educators tapping into the capabilities of mobile devices for formative assessments are beginning to see the power of mobile
technology integration and certainly envisioning assessment to support student learning in a powerful and integrative manner. Other educators are much further along the continuum, and we hold their work forward as a goal for other educators to examine for their own use and inspiration. At this end of the continuum, educators are using mobile devices to position learner voice in examining and affecting real issues within communities. The journey is valuable, and we seek to honor it here by showcasing the stories of educators along the continuum as they seek to support and empower the learners with whom they work.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THIS BOOK

This book is organized into four sections, which include fifteen chapters. The first section focuses on practice; that is, the practice of embedding mobile technologies to support the work of teachers and learners. As such, this section articulates the various ways educators have been able to harness the power of mobile technology in a way that gives learners an opportunity to share their voice or to engage in educational activities otherwise previously restricted because of ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or special needs.

In Chapter 1, Jessica Herring provides examples of using mobile technology to support the work of her students in her high school English classrooms. Her classroom relies on PBL models and seeks to engage and empower learners through authentic problems of practice. Learners in her classroom create, improve, revise, and design. More importantly, they learn to challenge themselves, to fail, and ultimately, to persevere in accomplishing the learning tasks they set for themselves.

In Chapter 2, Luis Perez, Ann Gulley, and Logan Prickett tell a story of one special needs learner’s experiences in succeeding in college through engaging in practices steeped in inquiry and collaboration. Logan’s case study shows how the power of mobile technology benefitted all involved in his journey and benefits other special needs learners facing physical and visual impairments.

In Chapter 3, Amy Thompson and Donna Wake describe how mobile technologies were used to support struggling readers in a specialized reading clinic. Students and tutors in the study used open-ended tablet applications to support literacy development. These apps positioned learners as curators of their own literacy development and empowered them to represent and document their own strengths and experiences.

In Chapter 4, Shaunna Smith writes about taking mobile technologies into community contexts in order to provide students with PBL-based makerspace experiences. Mobile technologies were used to create culturally responsive, problem based learning based on local community concerns and interests.
In Chapter 5, Julia Bello and her co-authors explore how mobile technologies can support Mozambican women in agricultural extension education programs. This study examines how training offered via mobile phones in the form of an animated curriculum supported women in their agricultural work as they supported their families and local communities.

In Chapter 6, Monica McGlynn-Stewart and her colleagues explore how preschool children and their teachers used mobile apps to support young learners’ literacy development. These learners and teachers were empowered in creating, documenting, and reflecting on their own learning.

The second section of the book focuses on curriculum and resources and outlines the many ways mobile technology has been an instrumental aspect of opening access to information and services across a wide spectrum of peoples and geographies.

In Chapter 7, Alesha Baker and her colleagues explore how Open Educational Resources (OER) were used in a K-12 context as local teachers wrote and implemented the use of open textbooks using mobile devices. The authors explore the benefits and challenges of the OER-based project.

In Chapter 8, Ying Xiu and his peers argue that if OER are to have wide impact, that educators must examine the role of mobile devices, mobile apps, and mobile app markets. They compare and contrast mobile apps across a set of variables affecting the adoptions and implementation of OER in learning contexts.

In Chapter 9, Margaret Njeru examines current higher education contexts in Kenya and explores the availability of resources in Kenya to university students. The author concludes that mobile devices hold the key to providing equitable and adequate resources to ensure student academic success.

The third section of the book focuses on assessment and details how educators and students may use mobile technology in the proactive assessment of scholarship and skill attainment. The authors in this section focus on the many ways mobile technology has been an instrumental aspect of opening access via assessment to information and services across a wide spectrum of peoples and geographies.

In Chapter 10, Grace Onodipe describes how she uses mobile technologies to enact formative assessment activities in her classrooms in order to empower and support nontraditional, dual-enrollment students. Her assessment methods promote her ability to enact progressive pedagogies, such as peer instruction and flipped classroom models.

In Chapter 11, Nancy Gallavan explores how educators must consider the ethics and equity behind assessments, and about how this work is complicated when assessments are delivered via mobile technologies. This chapter examines the essential elements of ethics and equity with classroom assessments via mobile technology in online education with recommended guidelines for teachers to enhance their self-efficacy.
In Chapter 12, Sandra Veira Vasconcelos and Ana Balula examine the use of assessment via mobile technology in promoting language learning. They explore the role mobile devices can play in promoting students’ long-term content retention and suggest that mobile initiatives can have a positive effect in motivating students and promoting engagement, change and innovation.

In Chapter 13, Jacquelyn Chappel investigates whether the infringement of privacy inherent in using semi-public Web 2.0 platforms disrupts students’ sense of safety. The study finds that some discomfort contributed to student motivation and that too much comfort actually decreased motivation.

Finally, the fourth section of the book focuses on theory and presents two compelling models of using mobile technology to reach culturally diverse and exceptional populations.

In Chapter 14, Jason Trumble, Yara Farah, and David Slykhuis offer a model to teachers that supports the integration of differentiation, inquiry learning processes, and mobile technologies. Based on these lenses, this chapter provides a research-based conceptual framework aimed at improving learning experiences for digital age students from these two marginalized populations.

Finally, in Chapter 15, Nykela Jackson offers a base for our understanding of how to use mobile technologies for culturally responsive, problem based learning is a powerful and unique way to prepare students for the four C’s: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. This chapter provides theoretical and practical support of the innovative impact of using mobile technologies in student selected, problem-focused learning.

We offer this body of work as a beginning of our collective journey toward realizing the full potential of mobile technologies as a social change agent and a force for progressive learning. We feel these chapters, while exciting and full of promise and potential, represent the beginning of a very exciting odyssey. We see the face of education shifting rapidly and dramatically over the next decade due to the presence of mobile technologies to engage learners, empower learners, and transform learning spaces. We are only humbled and excited to enter this journey, and we appreciate the work of these authors as they help us move along this path.
REFERENCES


