

This learning guide is designed for use by Professional Learning Communities, learning coaches and teacher leaders, or as a self-paced study to enhance and support teacher practice in the area of literacy for students with significant disabilities.

## Literacy for All:

*In Conversation with  
Dr. Caroline Musselwhite*



This conversation guide is intended to be used after viewing the video clip, **The Cost of Underestimating the Potential of Individual Students**.



### General synopsis

In this short video clip, Dr. Caroline Musselwhite discusses why it is important to not underestimate the potential of individual students, particularly students with significant disabilities.

### Key understandings

- For some students, small successes can mean big life changes.
- Progress isn't always what we might expect. We have to be willing to redefine success and be open to seeing positive changes and signs of success in unexpected ways.

### Questions for discussion

- What statements in this video caught your attention?
- From your own experience, can you recall a time when you might have underestimated the potential of a specific student? If so, what were the results of this and what made you reconsider your original assessment of the student's potential?
- From your own experience, can you describe an example when a small success meant big life changes for a student?
- How does this video clip challenge or affirm what you know about the behaviour of students with significant disabilities and what you see practised in different situations?
- How could this information be helpful to your work in the future?

### For more information

- Downing, J. (2010). *Academic Instruction for Students with Moderate and Severe Intellectual Disabilities in Inclusive Classrooms*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium. *Literacy for All*. Retrieved from <http://abliteracyforall.wikispaces.com/>
- Jorgensen, C., McSheehan, M., and Sonnenmeier, R. (2010). *The Beyond Access Model*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Musselwhite, C. AAC intervention. Retrieved from <http://aacintervention.com/>

### Acknowledgement:

This guide was developed through a collaboration between Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium and Alberta Education. It is freely provided in support of improved teaching and learning under the following Creative Commons licence. 

Link to the Inclusive Education: Support for Implementation website at <http://inclusiveeducationpdresources.ca/> for Professional Development Resources.

For further information on learning opportunities to support inclusion, visit <http://www.arpdc.ab.ca/>.