

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, **Importance of Building Background Knowledge**.



General synopsis

In this short video clip, Dr. Caroline Musselwhite discusses the importance of helping students with significant disabilities build background knowledge related to reading a text.

Key understandings

- Students with significant disabilities may have gaps in their background experience.
- Talk-alouds are a useful strategy that teachers can use to help students build background knowledge and make vocabulary connections.

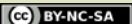
Questions for discussion

- Think about Dr. Musselwhite's example of how a teacher might build background knowledge for a story about feelings. What are some of the strategies she suggests?
- Thinking about the students you work with, what are some of the strategies you use to build their background knowledge?
- What is one new way you could use to build the background knowledge of your students? Why are you choosing this strategy?

For more information

- Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium. *Literacy for All*. Retrieved from <http://abliteracyforall.wikispaces.com/>
- Erickson, K., and Koppenhaver, D. (2007). *Children with Disabilities: Reading and Writing the Four Blocks® Way* Greensboro, NC: Carson-Dellosa. 66–68.
- Musselwhite, C. *AAC intervention*. Retrieved from <http://aacintervention.com/>

Acknowledgement:

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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/>.