



## 2013-2014 AESN Case Study

**School:** Eagle View Elementary **District:** SD85 Vancouver Island North

**Area of focus:** Enhancement Agreement

**Inquiry Team Members:** Sharon Campbell, Sandra Gunson, Christina MacDonald, Heather Miller, Marilyn Randall, Sarah Soltau-Heller

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**Question/focus area:** This year our focus was on student self-assessment and metacognition of reading.

**Scanning:** As the teachers in our project went through the scanning process, as well as through administering a new to us reading assessment, we realized that we have proficient readers, however they are struggling in reading comprehension with respect to skills needed for retelling as well as in their metacognition of themselves as readers. This is connected to Goal 2 of our districts Enhancement Agreement: *All partners will work towards increasing the level of academic success for each Aboriginal student.* Teachers in our project also regularly use Aboriginal content materials within classroom lessons on reading instruction.

**Focus:** The key area of learning was in reading, specifically increasing reading comprehension using feedback, clear learning intentions, co-creating criteria as well as having students that are able to set goals and talk about their learning. We selected this area based on results from the Diagnostic Reading Assessment 2, which showed that our students were still working towards fully meeting expectations in retelling and extending their thinking.

**Hunch:** Our hunch is that we have been focusing on teaching reading mechanics more heavily than retelling with specific information. We had been focusing on big ideas and summarizing beginning, middle and end in general terms. When we moved to our new reading assessment we became aware of extended criteria students should use when demonstrating comprehension. We also recognized from using the new another reading assessment last year that students fell down on expressing themselves during the written portion.

### **New professional learning:**

The First Peoples principle of learning that we focused on was:

“Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).”

Using this principle of learning our team sat down and reflected on our practices for having students think about themselves as learners in reading. We shared practices we were using in our classrooms and then learned from each other. We reconnected with the book study we had done on being Powerful Readers. We had in-depth conversations on our new reading assessment tool, questioning how we are using it, what it is telling us and how do we use the information/data we had gathered to move our learners forward? How accurate is this assessment for our readers, and where do we go next with it?

**Taking action:** Each member of our team created their own question, using reading comprehension as our overall area of focus. One team member focused on student feedback, as well as ensuring her students were able to understand and talk about their own learning in reading, how they were doing, and what they were working on. This included having a goal wall posted in her classroom so students were able to refer to and remember their goal. A second team member started keeping track of how students were moving among her small reading groups, and has begun to inquire as to how much growth is happening for all learners by using guided reading. She is steadily looking at what assessment Benchmarks are telling us, compared to other reading assessments, and questioning their alignment so that we get impact student learning. Another group member reflected and revised her literature circles so students had clear criteria posted, with exemplars for their journaling, with a focus on demonstrating comprehension. We also worked with our literacy coaches to watch a lesson that demonstrated what transformational learning looks like within a classroom lesson. This was very powerful for all who were able to attend.

**Checking:** When checking in, we did notice that many students were able to perform better on the task of reading comprehension based on our assessment results in the spring of 2014, compared to their fall, 2013 assessment. We are unsure if students were now more familiar with the idea and criteria needed for retelling, due to teaching strategies, or was it that they were now familiar with the testing process.

Looking back we did notice a change in teacher practice in terms of reading instruction. The teachers on our team questioned and inquired about their reading instruction. They reflected, and asked themselves if they were providing feedback that helped move kids forward. Many on our team switched to letting kids know that learning is hard work and that we must keep at it, it is not all easy, but you can do it, even if you need help.

**Reflections/Advice:** Next, we would like to go deeper with our inquiry on how we use the new assessment to guide our teaching. It would be nice for teachers on our team to share with others on our staff what they have done with respect to feedback, meta-cognition, and how they have used the new assessment tool to move students forward in their learning.