Theory & Practice to Improve Reading Comprehension Skills and Motivation

- **Break old patterns** where students read texts and then discuss as a whole class. The more whole class teaching, the less learning occurs.

- **Explicitly model reading comprehension strategies**
  - Monitor and fix up
  - Back up and reread
  - Connect to prior knowledge
  - Ask questions throughout
  - Infer and support with evidence
  - Use text features
  - Determine author’s purpose
  - Recognize literary elements
  - Compare and contrast

- **Reinforce comprehension strategies through small group guided reading and individual conferencing**

- **Build background knowledge** by using context and information texts

- **Build vocabulary** and teach word identification strategies

- **Stimulate active reading** through pre-reading questioning and critical literacy exercises
  - Whose voices are presented? Marginalized? Silenced?
  - What are the intentions of the author?
  - Switching involves reframing the text by switching certain elements (gender, theme, setting, emotion, ethnic, language switch)
  - Exploring different viewpoints (alternative texts, character substitutions or perspectives, juxtaposing texts or pictures)

- Through conferencing, **detect students who lack accuracy and fluency** and thus lose track of the meaning of what they are reading. Work together to target corrective strategies.

- **Writing about reading** (formally and informally) deepens comprehension

- **Choose engaging and culturally relevant reading material**

- Incorporate the oral aspect of literacy where **students discuss their reading** with each other

- **Struggling readers and writers need more practice, not less!**

References:


“Unlocking The Potential of Aboriginal Students” is a webcast produced by the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat in Ontario’s Ministry of Education. (2006) http://resources.curriculum.org/secretariat/may24.shtml