

Teacher Profile: Michelle Redman

District – SD 23 Central Okanagan
School – Ecole Glenrosa Middle School
Role/Title – Learning Assistance Teacher



I love teaching ELL! The growth for students arriving with minimal English is exponential and their joy at the discovery of a new language is motivating to everyone around them! One of my favourite resources once we've established survival language and learned the alphabet, is sequencing picture cards like SPARK! <https://thesparkinnovations.com/>

As a middle school Learning Assistance teacher working with a high incidence caseload I have had to make a choice (the sheer number of students on the caseload and time allowed required a choice) between an intervention program and a homework/classroom support model (run in many schools for high incidence learners). I run a structured intervention program informed by data and progress monitoring. Learning Assistance budgets can vary widely in BC, especially for high incidence caseloads, but there are so many free resources available for teachers and when we work with our teacher-librarians they are able to support our programming by purchasing key resources.

I have been asked what my greatest frustration is and the answer is easy - people underestimating low-performing teens. I remember one year, I was new at a high school and I was advised that I would be working with kids who were just getting to their completion certificate. The people at the school weren't uncaring, they weren't unprofessional, they were simply overwhelmed by the needs of learners near the end of their 12th year. Teachers were not prepared to teach students how to read. These were kids who could not read CVC, some of them didn't know all their letter sounds, and as a result, they were in complete-shutdown. Creating a safe space and getting participation will be challenging but if you can get close then you can begin teaching students to read day-by-day.

