

GIFTED AND TALENTED

SERVICE NEWSLETTER

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October 2014

10 THINGS TEACHERS SHOULD KNOW

- 1. Gifted students don't look the same.**
Gifted students can show their gifts and talents in many ways. a. *General Intellectual Ability* – overall high intelligence and ease of learning. b. *Specific Academic Field Ability* – has strengths in specific academic areas. c. *Creativity* – prefers complexity and open-endedness, is a risk-taker, confident, and accepts disorder. d. *Artistic* - uses the artistic area to communicate, experiments in the artistic medium, sets high standards in the artistic area. e. *Leadership* - is a visionary, can manipulate systems, has a cooperative attitude, and influences the behaviors of others. f. *Affective* - is motivated in work that excites, is self-directed, independent, high degree of concentration.
- 2. Gifted students need...Support.**
Gifted students need support, *both personally and academically*, to achieve their potential. There is not one way to support gifted and talented students. Support should include special services, advanced content, peer interaction and acceptance of their uniqueness.
- 3. Know your students.**
Pre-testing and eliminating already mastered content/skills for students is the first way to serve students with gifts and talents. This process allows students to have time to learn more deeply in a content area or to explore an area of interest instead of repeating content.
- 4. Know the program.**
Become familiar with local gifted policies. Remember that children are not just gifted when in a gifted class, they are gifted all day, every day.
- 5. Classroom behavior can be unexpected.**
Gifted students can ask questions that appear to be 'out of left field'. That can be because they are processing information at more rapid rate or thinking ahead of the content being presented, which may make them appear off task. They can also be stubborn, demanding, and not have many same age friends because of their more advanced processing.
- 6. Be aware of asynchronous development.**
Just because gifted students think at a more advanced level, doesn't mean they have the emotional/social behaviors of an adult. Many gifted students carry on very adult conversations but may cry if they get their feelings hurt by another student. Their chronological age, social, physical, emotional, and intellectual development may all be at different levels.

Teaching

You laugh, you cry, and you work harder than you ever thought you could. Some days you're trying to change the world and some days you're just trying to make it through the day. Your wallet is empty, your heart is full, and your mind is packed with memories of kids who have changed your life. Just another day in the classroom.

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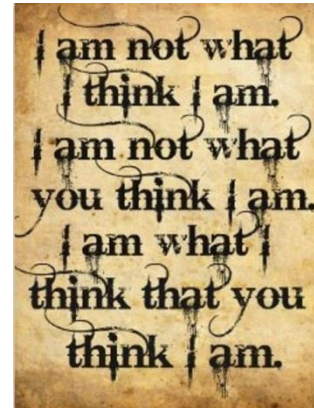
- 7. Understand how the gifted student thinks.**
Gifted students often think abstractly and with such complexity that they may need help with concrete study and test taking skills. They may not be able to select one answer in a multiple choice question because they see how all the answers might be correct.
- 8. Gifted students tend to struggle with perfectionism.**
Gifted students who do well in school may define success as getting an "A" and failure as any grade less than an "A". They may be unwilling to try anything where they are not certain of guaranteed success. They may equate achievement and grades with self-esteem and self-worth, which sometimes leads to fear of failure and underachievement.
- 9. Gifted students may have multi-potentiality.**
Gifted students can be successful in several areas. This can impact course selections, careers, and life-paths. Remember that just because an individual is 'good' at something might not mean they want to continue working in that area for a lifetime.
- 10. Gifted children are problem solvers.**
They benefit from working on open-ended, interdisciplinary problems. Remember that some gifted learners are sequential and others are spatial in how they process.

Resource:

ODE Javits Project: I-GET-GTEd Teacher Module

SO WHAT DO I LOOK FOR TO MAKE A REFERRAL?

In the last issue, I presented a comparative list of the bright learner versus the gifted child, which is a valuable guide to begin to recognize a child that could be referred for gifted testing. But what if we just focus on the gifted child? It can be fairly easy to recognize a student's strengths; however, as stated above, in the gifted student, they are often 'hidden' behind behavior problems, which is how many students go unidentified. Below are some possible problems that go along with the strengths that a gifted child may exhibit. By recognizing the connection between giftedness and behavior, you will gain an understanding of the student and can deal with those issues using academic strategies.



REFERRAL PROCESS

What is the advantage to referring a student to be tested for gifted identification if you already teach to meet the needs of all learners?

- It is more than just academics with gifted learners. They have unique social and emotional needs that require support.
- Bringing down the barriers to understand and provide an open and accepting environment.
- Recognizing and intervening appropriately to deal with behavior issues
- Realizing full potential and promoting motivation and independence.

Won't the student feel 'stupid' if they are not identified?

- Stress the recognition more than the identification. Students care more about what their teacher(s) think that the results of a test.
- Not all 'gifted' students will test well, so go with your gut and align your instruction regardless of test results. Explain this to the parents and students.
- Acknowledgement will provide an opportunity for motivation and a feeling of acceptance if recognition continues despite results.

How do I refer a student?

The process to refer a student for gifted testing will vary by district so be sure to speak to your building principal and/or local gifted professional for timelines and details.

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Strengths	Possible Problems
Acquires/retains information quickly	Impatient with others; dislikes basic routine
Enjoys problem solving	Resists routine practice; questions teaching procedures
Seeks cause-effect relationships	Dislikes unclear/illogical areas (e.g. traditions or feelings)
Emphasizes truth and equity	Worries about humanitarian concerns.
Seeks to organize things and people	Constructs complicated rules; appears bossy.
Creative/inventive; likes new ways of doing things	May be seen as disruptive or out of step.
Intense concentration in areas of interest.	Neglectful during periods of focus; stubborn
Sensitivity, empathy; desire to be accepted	Sensitive to criticism or peer rejection
High energy, alertness	Frustration with inactivity, may be seen as hyperactive
Independent; prefers individualized work; reliant on self	May reject parent or peer input; nonconformity.
Diverse interests and abilities	May appear disorganized or scattered; frustrated over lack of time.
Strong sense of humor	Peers may misunderstand humor; may become "class clown" for attention.



READY TO USE MATERIALS/RESOURCES

- Bookmarks for ELA with Adjusted Questions for novels. <http://www.richland.k12.wi.us/HS/GT/Seventy-five%20bookmarks.pdf>
- Brainstorming and Discussion activities to facilitate *adjusting questions*. Samples for all grades and subjects included. Excerpt from [Worksheets Don't Grow Dendrites](#) by Marcia L. Tate.
- Another low prep strategy to differentiate in the 5-12 classroom is using *graphic organizers*. Blank organizers and samples from core areas are included. Excerpt from [Strategies for Differentiating in the Content Areas](#) by Beverly & Troy Strayer
- Allowing students to explore their uniqueness from a social/emotional side, will help to increase awareness and acceptance of the differences in all students. Below are two activities you could try from [Learning to be a Durable Person](#) by Mary Hennenfent.
 - [Fingerprints of Greatness - grades K-5 - What does gifted mean](#)
 - [Its Okay to be Different - grades k-3](#)
- Assessment Literary Ohio: Great Resources on DOK and Cognitive Rigor (Bloom's) along with Next Generation Assessments (NGA) <http://www.livebinders.com/play/play?present=true&id=1389959#anchor>

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Steps include:

- Recognizing the student
- Filling out a permission form to have the student tested
- Have the testing administered
- Getting and reported the results
- Providing the appropriate services.

Resources:

"Identifying Gifted Students: Who Gets Tested and Why?" by David Palmer, Ph.D

"Nurturing Social Emotional Development of Gifted Children" by James T. Webb

ODE Javits Project: I-GET-GTEd Teacher Module

LOW PREP DI STRATEGY

Teachers will often avoid using differentiated strategies as they can be time consuming; however, there are many 'low prep' strategies that can be implemented easily and quickly.

Questioning, whether in class or on a worksheet, not only allows the teacher to see what the student has learned, but it provides an opportunity for student expression and advanced learning. It is an easy way to increase rigor in your classroom. The art of questioning can inspire learning. **Adjusted questioning** is one *low prep* method that will allow you to differentiate in your classroom. By adjusting questions to match student readiness, interested and/or learning profile you can target each student to meet your learning goals.

So how do you adjust questions?

- ✓ You must know the thinking level you're your students.

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- √ Use key, or “trigger” words from Bloom’s Taxonomy or Depth of Knowledge Wheel to develop your questions.
- √ Remember *closed ended* questions check student knowledge.
- √ *Open ended* questions check student understanding and can stimulate discussion.
- √ Questions at the lower level (of Bloom’s) will evaluate student preparation and comprehension. They can reveal strengths and weakness and help to review and summarize content. They do not extend learning.
- √ Questions at the higher level (of Bloom’s) will encourage students to think more deeply and critically. They encourage problem solving and discussions and guide students to seek information on their own.

[Question Frames](#) can be a great way to start adjusting questions prior to doing a lesson. [DOK Question Stems](#) (Choose DOK/Cognitive Rigor then Question Stems) can be an easy reference you can use throughout a lesson, in small groups, or as you create assessments. Print it out and keep it as a handy reference. It works for all levels and subject areas.

You could use *adjusted questioning* as an alternative to classwork and/or homework for students who have content mastered. Levels 3 and 4 DOK and higher level blooms questions will have the student apply and evaluate the content they have mastered instead of doing more of the same. All students would benefit from those that need additional practice to those that require more of a challenge.

Resources:

“Adjusting Questions”
http://www.richland.k12.wi.us/HS/GT/Adjusting_Questions.htm

[Assessment Literacy Ohio](#) by RtT Assessment Literacy Team

“Understanding and Using Blooms Taxonomy to Improve Instructional Practice”
<http://farr-integratingit.net/Theory/CriticalThinking/reviseocog.htm>

The Learner Relationship

What Teachers Prepare

- **Content**
--Access
- **Process**
--Sense-making
- **Product/
Learning Artifacts**
--Evidence

How Students Engage

- **Readiness**
--Current Skill Level
- **Interests**
--Choices and Backgrounds
- **Learning Profile**
--Brain Intelligences

Image Credit: John McCarthy

THE LEARNER RELATIONSHIP

Did you know that there 3 different approaches to DI? That’s right. You can differentiate the *content, process and product* of your instruction to reach your students. The focus is often on the product, but it can be just as effective to differentiate the content and the process. Those DI experts out there can submit their ideas on how to differentiate content and process [here](#). I will share it in our next newsletter. You can use all three or just one area depending on your students and the lesson.

Adjusting questions is a great way to model the three areas. The content can be differentiated by preparing questions during the lesson that will allow students of different ability levels to gain knowledge and/or extend their thinking of material. The process can be altered by providing students with different questions to explore the material. For example, some will do basic knowledge gathering whereas others can explore and be creative depending on the question level provided to the student. Finally the product can be differentiated using *adjusted questions* by assessing students at their level. For example, students might be given a different exit slip with varying question levels to assess learning or additional question(s) can be added to a test or quiz on an individualized basis as a way to differentiate the assessment of what they learned.