What is Happening in the World of Gifted Education?

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We now believe gifted students are more likely to appreciate a teacher’s effectiveness for actual teaching behaviors rather than personality alone (Rogers, 2007). Traits rated as “very important” include:

- Covering the material that is “supposed” to be covered
- Eliminating excess drill and revision
- Compacting the curriculum through pre-assessment
- Adjusting instructional pace appropriate to subject matter
- Providing immediate corrective feedback
- Provides scaffold (whole of the concept) up front, followed by chance to analyze and reflect on its parts
- Makes individual accommodations for some learners
- Is organized and clear in presentations
Personality and the personal traits of effective teachers of the gifted are still important to gifted learners, however (Rogers, 2007). These include:

- Seeing the gifted learner as a unique individual
- Liking able students in general
- Being patient and even-tempered in nature
- Having sense of humor “in line” with subject matter
- Exhibiting enthusiasm for subject, continuing to learn in that area along with students
- Showing no overt biases toward race or gender in treatment of students
- Trusts students to make good learning choices and provides opportunities for independent learning
Who the Gifted Learner is Has Become Clearer

• Focus on multiple expressions of giftedness (potential) and talent (performance)
  – Development of program services to accommodate different potentials and different talents -- no longer a single program or provision

• The importance of learning rate in ultimate retention is better understood
  –Intellectually gifted and maths/ science/ foreign language talented students must work 2-3 times faster than “regular” class pace in order to retain accurately
USOE Definition 1972 (Marland)

Visual Performing Arts

Leadership

Specific Academic

Creativity

Intellectual
Gagné’s Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent

**GIFTEDNESS (G)**
- **NATURAL ABILITIES (NAT)**
  - **DOMAINS (G)** (Examples of sub-domains)
  - **INTELLECTUAL (Gi)**
    - General intelligence (g factor)
    - Fluid, crystallized reasoning
    - Verbal, numerical, spatial
    - Memory, sense of observation
  - **CREATIVE (Gc)**
    - Inventiveness (problem-solving)
    - Imagination, originality (arts), retrieval fluency
  - **SOCIAL (Gs)**
    - Communications (tact, perceptive, eloquence)
    - Influence (leadership, persuasion)
  - **PHYSICAL (Gp)**
    - Sensory (visual, auditory, affective, etc.)
    - Motor (power, endurance, balance, coordination, etc.)

**NATURAL ABILITIES (NAT)**
- **GIFTEDNESS (G)**
  - **MILEAU** (physical, cultural, social, familial, etc.)
  - **PERSONS** (parents, teachers, peers, mentors, etc.)
  - **PROVISIONS** (programs, activities, services, etc.)
  - **EVENTS** (encounters, awards, accidents, etc.)

**CATALYSTS**
- **DEVELOPMENT PROCESS (D)**
  - **INTRAPERSONAL (I)**
    - PHYSICAL / MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS
      - Appearance, handicaps, health
      - Temperament, personality traits, well-being
    - SELF-MANAGEMENT
      - Maturity
    - AWARENESS OF SELF / OTHERS
      - Strengths & weaknesses, emotions
    - MOTIVATION/VOLITION
      - Needs, interests, passions, values
      - Resource allocation, adaptive strategies, effort

**TALENT (T)**
- **SYSTEMATICALLY DEVELOPED COMPETENCIES (SYSDEV)**
  - **FIELDS (T)** (Examples relevant to school-age youths)
    - **ACADEMICS** (language, science, humanities, etc.)
    - **ARTS** (visual, drama, music, etc.)
    - **BUSINESS** (sales, entrepreneurship, management, etc.)
    - **LEISURE** (chess, video games, puzzles, etc.)
    - **SOCIAL ACTION** (media, public office, etc.)
    - **SPORTS** (individual & team)
    - **TECHNOLOGY** (trades & crafts, electronics, computers, etc.)

**CHANCE (C)**
Who the Gifted Learner is Has Become Clearer

• The gifted mind is more likely to be decontextualist in acquiring new learning than constructivist
  – Effective learning is most likely to occur when the gifted learner is taught concepts, principles, generalizations, and works on issues or problems (but all this is supported with adequate access to facts, details, vocabulary, basic knowledge)
  – Effective learning is most likely to occur when the concept is taught whole-to-part, rather than part-to-whole
What the Gifted Learner Should be Taught is Clearer

- **Content that is**
  - Abstract
  - Complex
  - Multidisciplinary
  - Human issues-related
  - Methodology-related

- **Skills that are**
  - Higher Order
  - Open-ended
  - Proof & Reasoning
  - Problem-based, inquiry-based, guided discovery-based
  - Group-produced (qualified)
  - Allow for Freedom of Choice in Learning
  - Strategies to improve retention (memory training)
What the Gifted Learner Should be Taught is Clearer

• The “extras” that must be included in their studies include:
  – The “classics” of literature
  – The “big ideas” of philosophy
  – The major principles of the arts (for all arts domains
    • Visual arts
    • Music
    • Theatre
    • Dance
    • Creative Writing
    • Graphic Design
  – The “big ideas” of science and mathematics
How We Should Organise the Learning of Gifted Learners is Clearer

- Gifted learners must be grouped for substantial blocks of time daily for learning and for socialising
  - Self-contained gifted classrooms or schools
  - Cluster Grouping
  - Within Class Grouping
  - Cross-Grading
  - Vertical Grouping - Grade telescoping
  - Pull out/send out/withdrawal programs
  - Like-ability/performance Cooperative Grouping
  - Academic teams and competitions
  - Affective support groups
  - Service learning and other group projects
Research on Instructional Management: Grouping Permutations

- Full-time ability grouping (ES = .49, .33, 1.04)
- Regrouping for specific instruction (ES = .34, .79)
- Cluster grouping of GT students (ES = .59, .44)
- Withdrawal grouping (ES = .45, .44, .32)
- Within class ability grouping (ES = .34)
- Cross-graded classes (ES = .45, .46)
- Mixed ability cooperative groups (ES = 0)
- Like ability cooperative groups (ES = .28)
- Saturday classes (ES = 1.56)
How We Should Organise the Learning of Gifted Learners is Clearer

- Gifted learners will need to be accelerated in some form at some time in their school lives
  - Grade-based Acceleration
    - Vertical Grouping/Grade Telescoping
    - Grade Skipping
    - Early Admission to University
  - Subject-Based Acceleration
    - Multi-age or Composite Classes
    - Dual Enrolment
    - Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate programs
    - Subject Acceleration
    - Cross grading
    - Credit for Prior Learning, Testing Out
Research on Instructional Management: Acceleration Permutations

- Grade Skipping (ES = .37, .34, .42)
- Early Entrance to School (ES = .30)
- Subject Acceleration (ES = .48)
- Grade Telescoping (ES = .40)
- Concurrent Enrollment (ES = .22)
- Advanced Placement courses (ES = .62)
- International Baccalaureate (ES = .54)
- Early Admission to College (ES = .25, .20, .29)
- Credit by Examination (ES = .59)
- Cross-graded Classes (ES = .45, .46)
- Talent Search participation (ES = .34)
How We Should Organise the Learning of Gifted Learners is Clearer

• Some individualisation of the gifted learner’s program of studies will be necessary
  – Compacting the Curriculum
  – Independent Study, self-instructional materials
  – Credit for Prior Learning
  – Testing Out
  – Mentorships, Tutorships
  – On-line computerised courses
  – Distance learning
Individualisation Research Options

- **Individualisation**
  - Unique plan for individual child
    - Education plan
    - Compacting
    - Mentorship/one-to-one tutoring
    - Independent study
    - On-line/distance learning
  - Flexible progression through general K-12 curriculum
    - Non-graded classes
    - Multi-grade classes
    - Credit for prior learning
    - Testing out
    - On-line/distance learning
Research on Instructional Management: Individualization

- Non-graded classrooms (ES = .38)
- Multi-grade classrooms (ES = .19)
- One-to-one mentoring/tutoring (ES = .57)
- Compacting (ES = .83, .20, .17)
- Credit for prior learning (ES = .56)
- Talent Development/Talent Search (ES = .34)
- IEPs or ILPs (LO)
- Independent Study (ES = 0, 2.35)
- On-line, computerised courses (ES = .74, .40)
So, What Does This Mean for Educational Leaders?

- Take ceilings and basements off curriculum outcomes
- Provide links among subject areas whenever a new concept is introduced
- Target teach for gaps in skills and knowledge, but spend less than 10% of your time on remediation
- Provide new content and skills daily in specific areas of talent for individual students (for the rest, additional challenge 1-2 times per week)
So, What Does This Mean for Educational Leaders?

- Provide affective, individualised support for students through grouping for approximately 25% of your time with them.
- Regroup students according to their current performance levels in each subject taught and differentiate accordingly.
- Keep the pace fast and non-repetitive, especially in maths, science, and foreign language.
- Find content experts for individual learners when they have outstripped your knowledge of a talent area.
So, What Does This Mean for Educational Leaders?

• Choose content and curriculum carefully with these two maxims in mind
  – Would, Could, Should Questions (Passow)
  – HOTS not MOTS
It’s a daunting task, being an educator, bearing the responsibility for shaping both academics and attitudes. Accountability, as defined in today’s schools, often measures the easy stuff: the math facts memorized, the commas placed correctly, the historical events sequenced. But the true measure of the educator’s teaching performance is not so readily determined. No computer-scanned bubble sheet measures how our students feel about learning or their biases toward self and others. These indexes, the true value of learning and education, elude detection and measurement, sometimes for years...So, the brave educators wishing to enhance both students’ self-concepts and their achievements must be content with not knowing the immediate or long-term impacts of their actions.