

## ED 3780

### Part H: Students with Diverse Needs Gifted and Talented Students

#### Contents:

#### Page

1-2	Everyone Is Different
3	Resources
5-6	Strategies for Differentiation
6	Planning Continuums

## Everyone Is Different

That everyone is different should come as no surprise to future educators. Students come to schools with different genders, religions, races, and cultures. They also come with different ways of learning. As teachers in public schools, we are required by law to accommodate all learners in our classrooms.

In Level 2 for Secondary Education, two courses (3200 and 3260) directly discuss these students and ways to accommodate them. One area, however, is not discussed at length in either course. That area is education of students who are gifted. By the time these students reach high school, they are self-selecting courses that meet their needs. However, some students in this category are at risk of dropping out, committing suicide, or other destructive behaviors because their needs are not being met in school or in life.

Listed here are some things to keep in mind when teaching students who are gifted.

- **“Characteristics of the gifted** - The following characteristics are common but not universal: Shows superior abilities to reason, generalize or problem solve.
- Shows persistent intellectual curiosity.
- Has a wide range of interests; develops one or more interests to considerable depth.
- Produces superior written work or has a large vocabulary.
- Reads avidly.
- Learns quickly and retains what is learned.
- Grasps mathematical or scientific concepts readily.
- Shows creative ability or imaginative expression in the arts.
- Sustains concentration for lengthy periods on topics or activities of interest.
- Sets high standards for self.
- Shows initiative, originality, or flexibility in thinking; considers problems from a number of viewpoints.
- Observes keenly and is responsive to new ideas.
- Shows social poise or an ability to communicate with adults in a mature way.
- Enjoys intellectual challenge; shows an alert and subtle sense of humor.

These **characteristics** can lead to **conflicts** in the regular classroom, as the gifted child may:

- Get bored with routine tasks.
- Resist changing away from interesting topics or activities.
- Be overly critical of self and others, impatient with failure, perfectionistic.
- Disagree vocally with others, argue with teachers.
- Make jokes or puns at times adults consider inappropriate.
- Be so emotionally sensitive and empathetic that adults consider it over-reaction, may get angry, or cry when things go wrong or seem unfair.
- Ignore details, turn in messy work.
- Reject authority, be non-conforming, stubborn.
- Dominate or withdraw in cooperative learning situations.
- Be highly sensitive to environmental stimuli such as lights or noises.”

Characteristics downloaded 12/15/04 from  
<http://members.aol.com/svennord/ed/GiftedGlossary.htm>

## Resources

<http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/> University of Connecticut website for gifted education

<http://www.cec.sped.org/> Council for Exceptional Children

<http://members.aol.com/svennord/ed/GiftedGlossary.htm> Glossary of gifted education terms

<http://www.nagc.org/> National Association for Gifted Children

This site has many definitions, articles, and position papers on how to help students who are deemed “gifted” in both the classroom and life.

## Instructional and Management Strategies for Differentiation

Strategy	Description of Strategy
Compacting	A 3-step process that (1) assesses what a student knows about material to be studied and what the student still needs to master, (2) plans for learning what is not known and excuses student from what is known, and (3) plans for freed-up time to be spent in enriched or accelerated study.
Independent Projects	Process through which student and teacher identify problems or topics of interest to the student. Both student and teacher plan a method of investigating the problem or topic and identifying the type of product the student will development. This product should address the problem and demonstrate the student's ability to apply skills and knowledge to the problem or topic.
Interest Centers or Interest Groups	Interest centers (often used with younger students) and interest groups (often used with older students) typically provide enrichment for students who can demonstrate mastery/competence with required work. They are sometimes a vehicle for providing students with meaningful study when basic assignments are completed.
Tiered Assignments	In a heterogeneous class, a teacher uses varied levels of activities to ensure that students explore ideas at a level that builds on their prior knowledge and prompts continued growth. Student groups use varied approaches to exploration of essential ideas.
Flexible Skills Grouping	Students are matched to skills work by virtue of readiness, not with the assumption that all need the same spelling task, computation drill, writing assignment, etc. Movement among groups is common, based on readiness on a given skill and growth in that skill.
Learning Centers	Learning centers can be "stations" or collections of materials learners use to explore topics or practice skills. For gifted learners, learning centers should move beyond cursory exploration of topics and practice of basic skills, and should provide study in greater breadth and depth on interesting and important topics.

High-Level Questions	In class discussions and on tests, the teacher attempts to ensure that the highly able learner is presented with questions that draw on advanced level of information, require leaps of understanding, and challenge thinking.
Mentorships/ Apprenticeships	The students work with a resource teacher, media specialist, parent, volunteer, or community member to develop and carry out all or part of a project or task. This is also a useful way to help students develop skills of production in a field and to develop career awareness.
Contracts/ Management Plans	Contracts take a number of forms that begin with an agreement between student and teacher: The teacher grants certain freedoms and choices about how the student will complete tasks, and the student agrees to use the freedoms appropriately in designing and completing work according to specifications.

### Continuum of Instruction for the Gifted

Simple-----> Complex  
 Concrete-----> Abstract  
 Single-faceted-----> Multi-faceted  
 Small leap-----> Great leap  
 Closed-----> Open  
 Less independence-----> Greater independence  
 Foundational-----> Transformational  
 Slow-----> Quick

Pages 4 & 5 are from the following book which gives permission for the materials in the “Handouts and Overheads” sections to be reproduced for nonprofit, educational use only. The citation is:

Tomlinson, C. A., & Kiernan, L. J. (1994). *Challenging the gifted in the regular classroom: Facilitator's guide*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.