

# Content, Process, Product, Affect

## CONTENT

1. Presenting content that is related to broad-based concepts, issues, themes, or problems.

Content for curriculum tends to be more successful if the student is moving toward bigger ideas that require more abstract thinking than what might be found in the general education classroom.

- An issue might be described as a question or area of concern.
- A problem is a question of consequence, generally characterized by controversy and debate.
- Encapsulating big ideas or broad-based concepts (macros) within questions allows students to probe and investigate. Examples could include the following:
  - How do the structure and behavior patterns of insects enable them to survive?
  - In what ways do various systems interact within the study of forensic science?
  - What are the natural and imposed relationships in a specific society?
  - What is the naturally interdependent relationship among fractions, decimals, and percents in solving real world problems?

2. Integrating multiple disciplines into the area of study. In the development of G/T curriculum, the connections between the disciplines become as important as the connections within a discipline.

- Dissecting a particular topic of study to visualize the connections to history, literature, scientific inventions, and artistic movements allows students to see the relationships of political, social, and economic patterns/trends over time.
- A theory may be taught in mathematics but applied in science.

3. Presenting comprehensive, related, and mutually reinforcing experiences within an area of study. The instruction should follow some logical sequence and build on previous instruction, allowing students to use skills taught previously in another venue.

4. Allowing for in-depth learning of a self-selected topic within the area of study. If the student is able to select a topic that is mutually agreeable to both the student and teacher, student interest will drive his or her investigations to a much greater degree than if all decisions are made by the teacher. The student may have discovered that an unanswered question surfaces as the unit is taught, and interest arises to drive further investigations. The ability to go beyond superficial learning and dig into the details that support a concept or idea leads to in-depth learning.

## PROCESS

5. Develop independent or self-directed study skills. In order to conduct any in-depth study, students must have certain skills. These skills are usually found in the Scope and Sequence document. Among the skills should be those which lead to students' abilities to conduct research with limited direction from teachers.

6. Develop productive, complex, abstract, and/or higher level thinking skills. Research indicates that G/T students tend to function better with more complex, abstract thinking skills. Any program considered for these students should include thinking skills that emphasize critical thinking, creative thinking, problem finding and problem solving. They can be incorporated in lessons or in long-term assignments.

7. Focus on open-ended tasks. Assignments for G/T students should often include an aspect of open-endedness. Students should understand that in real-world situations there is seldom a complete end to a task. Open-endedness can be accomplished by incorporating questioning techniques which deal with opinion, require support with evidence or facts, and may have multiple acceptable answers. These types of questions are often referred to as essential questions, key questions, or guiding questions, and students may require assistance from the teacher to construct and compose them.

- Is human control of earth's climate possible?
- Does mathematics adequately model the phenomena?
- Do war tactics matter so long as they are noble? (Does the end justify the means?)
- Does "mind" differ from "brain?"

8. Develop research skills and methods. The involvement of the student with a variety of independent projects requires that the student have at his or her disposal skills of research. With knowledge increasing at a tremendous rate, the ability to know where an answer might be found is as critical as knowing what the answer is.

9. Integrate basic skills and higher level thinking skills into the curriculum. Any curriculum for advanced students should have as its basis the essential knowledge and skills identified by the state. It is imperative that G/T instruction grows out of the basic instruction and is related to it.

## PRODUCT

10. Encourage the development of products that challenge existing ideas and produce “new” ideas. Gifted/Talented curriculum must allow students to produce products that are advanced in relation to other students of the same age, grade, or environment. These products should reflect the use of information and not a recitation of previously achieved facts.

11. Encourage the development of products that use new techniques, materials, and forms. For many students who complete an independent study or a guided research project, a written format may be appropriate; however, it quickly becomes apparent that some projects beg for a different presentation format. Alternative products may be found in the Scope and Sequence of Products included in many curriculum documents. Choosing an appropriate presentation mode is a critical part of any modification for gifted learners. If a student has written a piano piece to accompany *Lord of the Flies*, the presentation of that piece may be the best way to evaluate its success.

- For student examples and guidelines, refer to Texas Education Agency Performance Standards Project for Gifted Students, <http://www.texaspsp.org>.

## AFFECT

12. Encourage the development of self-understanding which might include recognizing and using one’s abilities, becoming self-directed, and appreciating likenesses and differences between oneself and others. Of the many results of curricular modification, perhaps one of the most important is the appreciation the student might gain for his/her own abilities. Some assessment of student perception of individual gains should be included in any rubric involving independent study.

13. Evaluate student outcomes by using appropriate and specific criteria through self-appraisal, criterion referenced instruments, and/or standardized instruments. The result of G/T student studies and activities must be evaluated as with any other assessment device that matches the activity the study has involved. The use of standardized measures should be examined carefully to determine if the instrument actually reflects the outcome of the student work.

### Sources:

Kaplan, S. (1986). *The grid: A model to construct differentiated curriculum for the gifted* (pp.180-193). In J. S. Renzulli (Ed.), **Systems and models for developing programs for the gifted and talented**. Mansfield Center, CT: Creative Learning Press.

Kaplan, S. N. (1979). *In-service training manual: Activities for developing curriculum for the gifted and talented*. Los Angeles: National/State Leadership Training Institute on the Gifted and Talented.

Available: Wilmette Public Schools. (Spring 1998). *Excerpt from the Differentiation Initiative, Principles and Goals of Differentiation* (August 2002). Retrieved July 5, 2006 from <http://www.wilmette39.org/CD39/principles.html>