





Differentiating For Gifted Learners

Issaquah School District
Fall 2013



Katrina



“There is nothing so
unequal as the equal
treatment of unequal
people.”

– Thomas Jefferson



+ New WAC

- Chapter 28A.185.020 RCW
- (1) The legislature finds that, for **highly capable students**, access to accelerated learning and enhanced instruction is access to a **basic education**



Class Overview



- *Class One* October 23rd, 2013

- * *Overview of NACG conference/ gifted classroom research/trends*

- *Class Two*- November 27th, 2013

- * Differentiation strategies for skill-based learning (math, grammar, vocabulary, writing, reading, etc.)

- *Class Three*- December 11th, 2013

- * Differentiation strategies for concept-based learning (science, social studies, health, etc.)

+ NACG Convention 2012

- National Association of Gifted Children
- Attendees included public schools, charter schools, parents of gifted children, university professors, researchers and experts in the field
- Over 3,000 attendees comprised of all fifty states and 10 countries
- Meets yearly to discuss current research and trends in gifted education and advocacy for strengthening gifted programs nationwide

+ NACG INSIGHTS TO BRING TO ISD

1-Philosophy of Convention/ National Trends in Gifted Education

2-Insights on gifted students (perfectionism/ low income/ high ability learners/ traits of gifted learners & teachers of gifted learners)

3-Trends in Classroom Practice

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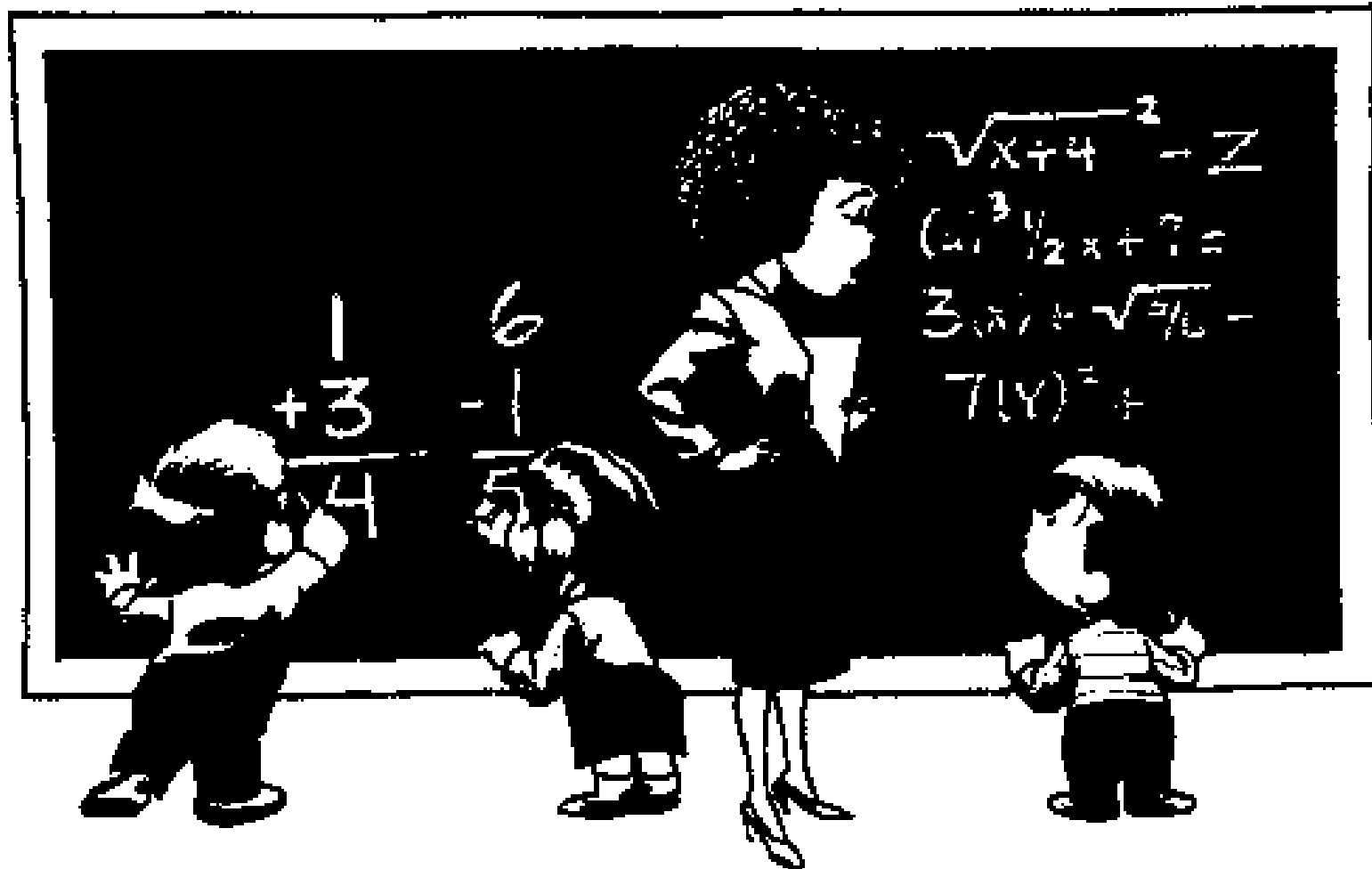




NACG CONVENTION PHILOSOPHY



- GT children have an right to their basic education; which entails a focus on how gifted children learn to reach their full potential (New WAC)
- Ignoring GT programs creates wasted human capital which is not only bad for students, but for society
- Viewed the nurturing of gifted and talented programs in public schools as a moral issue to address equity in our nation and a national security issue



**“How many times do I have to tell you...
you’re not supposed to read ahead.”**

+ Facts

- Gifted children are the largest group of underachievers in education
 - At least 63% of students with an IQ of 130 or above are seriously underachieving and many of these students have a record of truancy.
- Much of the educational community believes that gifted kids can succeed on their own and don't need any special nurturing; little is done to meet their needs
 - They are among the most poorly served in the school population.







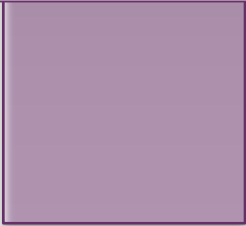
Contrasts in gifted education in Washington State vs. other states



- States have their own gifted centers/research/teacher development (Virginia)
- Gifted students follow a similar IEP process, considered as a special need (Colorado)
- Only nine out the 50 states require an IEP for gifted students
- Gifted funding varies greatly between states



“Restricting appropriate stimulation for children limits the very existence of their human abilities, creativity, and brilliance.” (Clark, pg.5)





WHAT CAN HARM A GIFTED CLASSROOM



- Perfectionism, fear of failure, and poor risk taking
- Lack of intellectual “peer ship.”
- Failure to appropriately differentiate for gifted learners.
- Setting the same learning goals for all and failing to plan for those who accomplish goals early
- Conducting re-run lessons for all students when only some students need more time, instruction and practice.
- Failure to recognize and respond to advanced knowledge and skills
- And inability for students to act on their interests through choice
- Lack of depth and complexity in learning
- Expectations that do not put gifted learners on the edge of their competencies

+ 3 Conspirators against Innovations in Gifted Learning

- Testing companies
- Standardization
- Pacing being similar everyday, every student

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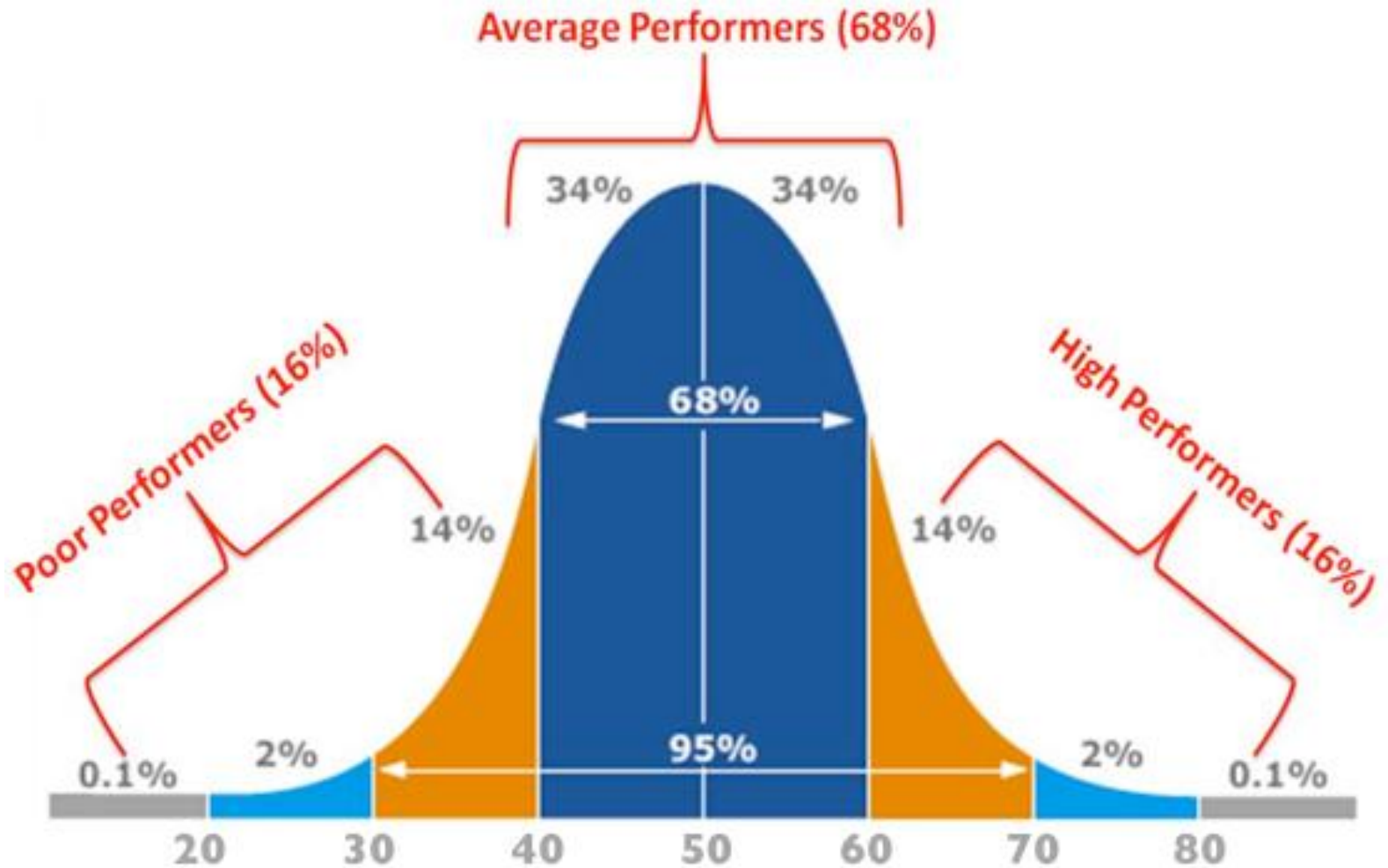






“Equal opportunity
does not mean having
the same opportunity.”

(Clark, pg. 6)





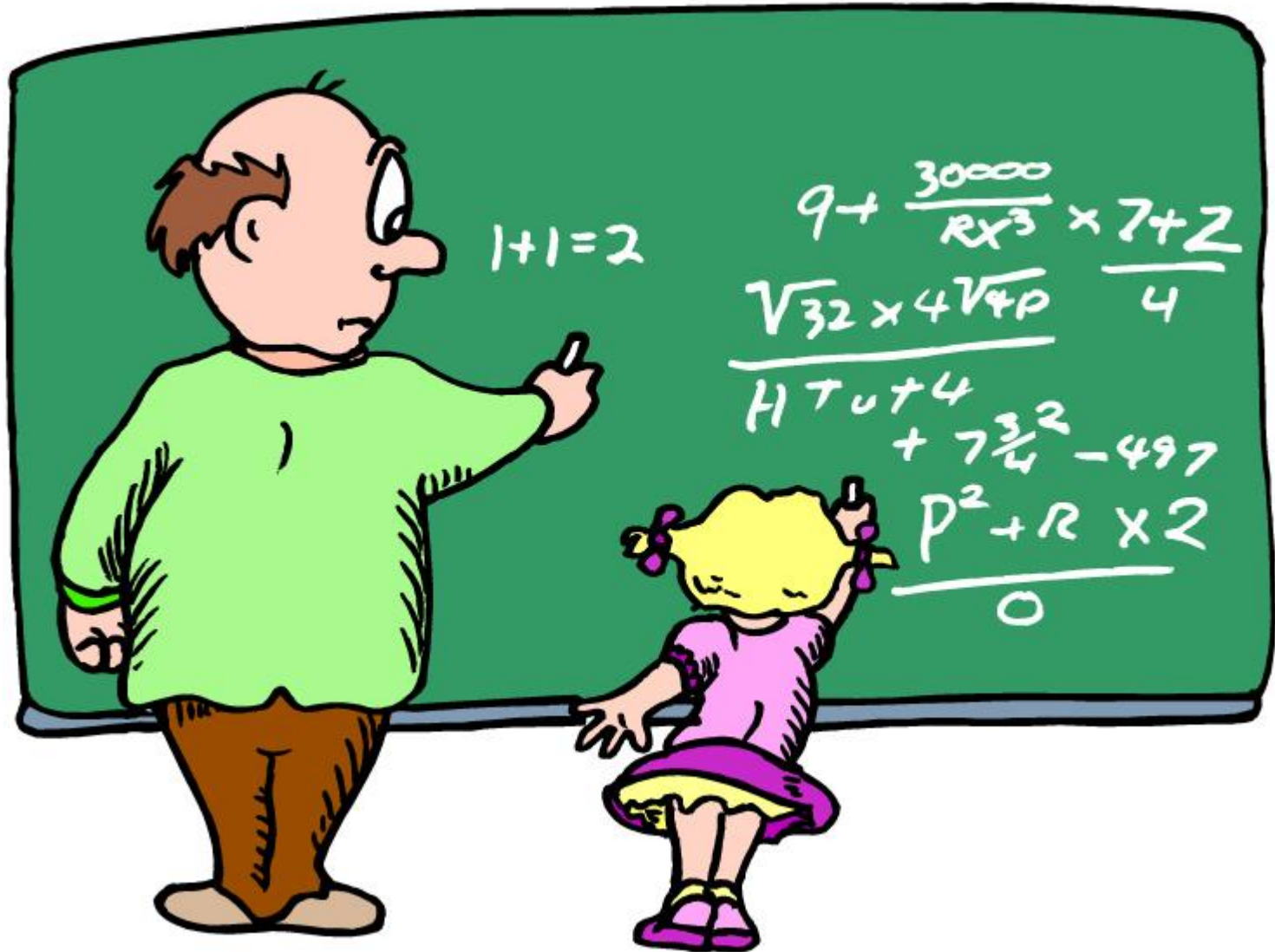
<http://www.guerillapolicy.org/education/2013/07/19/assessment-standards-and-the-bell-curve/>



“The learners in the upper 2% of the achievement scale or 2 to 4 years ahead of grade-level achievement need as much special instruction to continue their growth as do students at the lower end, yet special resources or specially trained personnel are rarely made available. This situation leads to unnecessary loss of ability, especially among girls and minority students, and regression toward a more average ability level is the observed outcome.”

(Clark, pg.21)





+ What this means in the classroom.....

- Individualized Learning
- Differentiation of Instruction
- Real World Scenarios
- Projects that allow for varying end products
- Assignments that allow student choice between options
- Alternative Grading Ideas (spectrum grading, no grading)
- Blending of subjects and disciplines in assignments.

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+ Traits of the Gifted Learner



+ GROUP SHARE?



- Maybe before we tell them the traits have them brainstorm traits at their table.
- Mindful on these traits in curriculum and instruction



Behavior and Learning Characteristics of Gifted Learners



■ The Short List

- Learn new material faster and at an earlier age
- Remember what they have learned for a very long time, making review unnecessary
- Able to deal with concepts that are too complex and abstract for their age peers
- Passionate interest in one or more topics
- Do not need to watch the teacher to understand what is being said; process more than one task at a time
- Heightened sensitivity; spirituality

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+

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“Brains on Fire”

Need Whole to Part



Wired to Learn

Less Sleep

Emotional Intensity

Perceive Deeply

Memory is organized differently



PERFECTIONISM



- * Typical and not abnormal for gifted children to have perfectionist tendencies
- *Educators must know the difference between gifted perfectionism and trauma based perfectionism
- *Kids need to learn how to manage perfectionism; Teachers play an important role in how perfectionism is dealt with by students
- *Risk and failure need to be components of a rich curriculum and embedded in the classroom culture: we need to ensure we aren't rewarding the wrong things
- *Trauma based perfectionism (the desire to please parents, be an idealized perfect-self or student) is damaging to children's emotional well-being and harms their learning potential
- * Classroom need to model that failure is ok (a necessary step to do this is alter grading policies, no count assignments or the ability to re-write papers)

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Low Income/ High Ability Learners.

- Poor student group tends to move all the time (difficult to track, especially immigrant and migrant populations)
- Parents often do have the time or backgrounds to advocate as strongly for their students. Conversely, often gifted class placement is too guided by parents advocating, creating a correlation between family wealth and advanced placement in school.
- Often low income learners self-select out of gifted programs due to social pressure



+ Number of Students in Poverty

17 states where over half (50%) of students are on free and reduced lunch

18 states with (40%) of students are on free and reduced lunch



"Mr. Wickers called me 'gifted' in front of the whole class. I'm ruined."



Reasons low income/high ability learners opt out of gifted classrooms

- *Identity-related/belonging

- *Are there people here who look like me? Do I feel at home here?

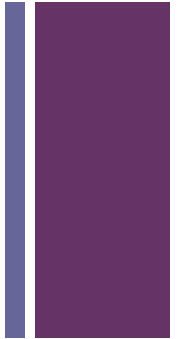
- *Is success betraying my cultural heritage?

INTERVENTIONS :

- *Promote dual identities: strong sense of ethnic/racial group membership as well as a strong sense of membership in broader society, school, athletics, or other activity

- *Appropriate role models

- *Make connects between developing skills and future abilities





If their learning needs aren't met...



- Gifted children might....
 - Resist doing schoolwork or homework; or work in a sloppy, careless manner
 - Become frustrated with the pace
 - Rebel against routine and predictability
 - Ask embarrassing questions and demand reasons for why things are done a certain way
 - Resist taking direction or orders
 - Daydream
 - Monopolize class discussions

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Barriers that Prevent Achievement




- A conception of “giftedness” that only emphasizes already developed ability and demonstrated achievement
- Misconceptions about low-income, promising learners
- The “gifted label” in some communities may be feared or avoided because it brings social isolation from peers
- Pedagogy and curriculum that does not support talent development and cultural diversity
- School identification policies and program features that hinder performance and participation (**one shot entrance to gifted programs -need multiple pathways, upward trajectories for performance, or parent advocacy**).
- Lack of access to supplemental programming (advantaged families use them, but they cost \$) that low income students do not have



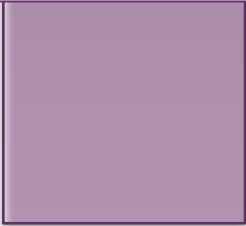
If their learning needs aren't met...



- Gifted children might (can't)....
 - Be bossy with peers and teachers
 - Become intolerant of their own imperfections and those of others
 - React in a super-sensitive way to any form of criticism or cry easily
 - Refuse to conform
 - Resist cooperative learning
 - Act out or disturb others
 - Be the “class clowns”
 - Become impatient when they are not called on



**“They have to let ME
be smart.”**





Qualities of Teachers Needed by Gifted Students



The Top 5 Qualities of Teachers Needed By Gifted Students.....

1. Have flexible teaching styles and be comfortable with situations in which students are flexibly grouped for learning and some students are doing different activities than others.
2. Provide a wide range of learning materials, including those that are appropriate for older students.
3. Be aware that gifted students need less time with practice and more time with complex and abstract learning tasks.
4. Possess strong skills in listening, leading discussions, and using inquiry-based instruction.
5. Respect students' strengths and weaknesses and have the ability to encourage students to accept both without embarrassment.



Best Practices and Research



- Use multiple and varied assessments
- Insure multiple entry points
- Look for upward trajectories
- First develop talent, then assess (flip this from norm)
- Provide multi-cultural training to teachers

+ Where do the Common Core and GT overlap?

- critical thinking
- evidence based argumentation
- connections across texts
- writing across skills
- Potential for scaling up texts and writing complexity



Application of Common Core Standards for Gifted Children



- Grade level common core standards will be inadequate.
 - The standards will be met more quickly than grade level peers.
- What to do:
 - Accelerated content strategies
 - Differentiation
 - Professional development is key!
- Assessments
 - Should be used to measure **ABOVE-GRADE LEVEL** standards!

+ Meeting the standards



Grade and Standard	Typical Learner Activity	Advanced Learners
<p>Grade 8</p> <p>RI.8.6.: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.</p>	<p>Students will review opinions from a Supreme Court case, determine each author's point of view, and summarize how he or she responds to the other viewpoints. Students will create a graphic organizer comparing the two points of view.</p>	<p>Advanced students will review opinions from a Supreme Court case, determine each author's point of view, summarize other viewpoints, and then prepare a written rebuttal to the author's point of view in the same format.</p>



What We are Doing Currently In Advanced middle school classes



- Great Books
- New Vocabulary Instruction
- Upfront/Scope Magazines
- Teacher Led Conferences
- TED Talks Research projects
- Extended novel selection
- Advanced Options (6th graders doing 7th grade coursework)



WHAT CAN WE ADD TO ENRICH OUR STUDENT'S EXPERIENCES??





Class Two: Differentiating for Skill Work



- Compacting one week at time
- Compacting one chapter or unit at time
- The Reading Activities Menu



Class Three: Differentiating for Content



- Study Guide
- Independent Study Project
- The Great Friday Afternoon Event
- Differentiated Student Skill Charts



Differentiating for Gifted Learners

They might not just “make it
on their own.”

Why Gifted Students Need Differentiation



- They get out of practice at working hard
- Kids think that gifted = doing things without trying
- “Unless kids are consistently engaged in challenging work, they will lose their motivation to work hard.”

Adjustments

- **Lessen the amount of grade-level work they must do because they can demonstrate mastery with less practice**
- Increase the pace of a lesson and allow them to work on extension work or independent study
- Adjust the content so it extends beyond grade-level parameters



Strategy: *Most Difficult First*

- Designed to provide students with an opportunity to show mastery on skills and get time to work on extension activities that are at a higher level.



How to Use **Most Difficult First**

1. Determine which items on an assignment represent the most difficult problems.

- a) They might appear together (at the end of the assignment) or be in various sections.
- b) Five examples are a reasonable number, but you could choose more or less.



How to Use **Most Difficult First**

2. Hand out the assignment to students and make note of the Most Difficult First examples

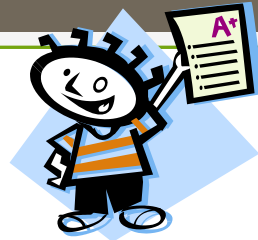
- a) Explain the process to students.



How to Use **Most Difficult First**

3. As you walk around the classroom helping students who need it, let those who are working on the Most Difficult First problems come to you.

- a) Once a checker is identified, he or she checks the papers of other students using his or her correct paper as an answer key.

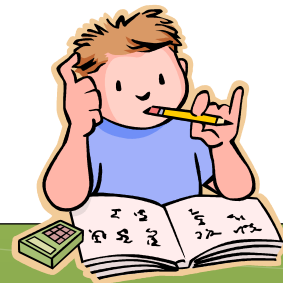


How to be a checker

- Students may only be a checker one time each week. (On other days they can work on extension work if they meet the Most Difficult First requirements)
- The checker cannot provide help to other students whose paper they are checking.
- The checker can not return to any student more than once.
- If they student's paper has zero or one wrong, the checker should say, "You can work on extension work."

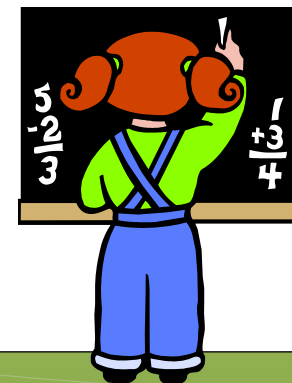
How to be a checker (con't)

- If the student's paper has more than one wrong, the checker should say, "Continue with the practice page."
- The checker should never discuss any information about another student's correct or incorrect answers.
- The checker should place all papers they have collected in a designated place. They should write the word "checker" at the top of their paper.



How to Use **Most Difficult First**

4. If you use the beginning of the next period to check the homework assignment, students who met the Most Difficult First requirement can work on extension work.



Guidelines for this Strategy

- Limit practice time to 10-15 minutes or less.
- Don't allow students to correct their own papers
- Don't allow students to correct any errors the checker discovers
 - If they get more than one wrong, they must complete the entire assignment.
- No student should be a checker more than once a week. Don't let a student use that to get out of doing challenging extension work.



Application

- Grammar
- Writing Elements: Thesis Statements, Topic Sentences
- Comprehension Questions
- Where else?

+ Video/ closure



+ Bibliography



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