Differentiating to Maximise Achievement

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Gifted Student Voice
Intellectually gifted students learning in mixed ability, inclusive classrooms
What do they say they experience?
What do they say they need?

Catalysts

Current international research is beginning to suggest that student voice, when it involves students having a genuine say in their learning, has served as a catalyst for change in schools.
(Mansfield et al., 2007 p. 61)

Increasing participation and involving all students in planning and decision making is consistent with the inclusion principle (Thomas et al in Cruddas, 2001, p. 63).

Few researchers have actually asked students directly about their educational experiences.
(Gallagher, Harradine and Coleman 1997 in Knight and Baker 2000)

….and fewer case studies have examined the characteristics and educational experiences of primary age gifted children.
(Green, 1986; Green, 1993; Harrison, 2003; Sankar-Deleeuw, 2004; Sankar De-Leeuw, 2007).

Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent
Gifts into Talents
This model recognises the existence, and the dilemma, of the gifted underachiever - the student who may have well above average ability but who has not yet been able to translate this into above average performance.

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What some of the research says
Students who are gifted want: leadership activities that are meaningful, and some real responsibility. (Wade & Putnam 1995 in Manefield et al, 2007 p9)

Students who are gifted need: the opportunity to clarify feelings beliefs and experiences as well as inform teachers of their learning needs. (Casey 1996, Gentry et al, 2002)

Challenge and choice were concerns listed by students in the Gentry et al (2002) study

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Rate of learning
Students who are intellectually gifted learn more rapidly and in greater depth than their age peers, in their domain of talent.

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ARE ALL STUDENTS LEARNING?
Of all the students in a mixed ability class, those who are most likely to learn the least during a school year are the most capable learners.

http://www.eduratio.be/advocacy.html

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Is there a gap between what students say they need and what they actually experience in the classroom?
Vialle and colleagues (2001) found that students wanted:
- pretests,
- compacting,
- choices, and
- student centered learning,
- enrichment/extension and
- support

But what they got was teacher directed learning.

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What is different about their learning?
- The learning rate of children above 130 IQ is approximately 8 times faster than for children below 70 IQ.
- Gifted students are significantly more likely to retain science and mathematics content accurately when taught 2-3 times faster than average class pace.
- Gifted students are significantly more likely to forget or mislearn science and mathematics content when they must drill and review it more than 2-3 times.

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students who are gifted may be;
• unidentified,
• underachieving
• academically successful in one specific area,
• living with a disability, or learning difficulty
• multi talented
• at risk of exclusion
• anywhere along the intellectual continuum of giftedness

INDIVIDUAL PERSONS
Students who are intellectually gifted are:

• not an homogenous group, “the gifted”

• but individuals who are gifted.

Some things we know about individuals who are gifted

1. Ease and speed of learning in their domain of ability
2. Gifted in at least one domain to a certain degree
3. Diverse individuals with asynchronous development

Some Questions about Voice

Who is allowed to speak?

Who listens?

What are the implications for action?

“The very people who most benefit by maintaining the system as it is, that is, those who find success in the system, are also the most likely to be involved in consultation and conversation, while the most disengaged are least likely to raise their voices.”
Why individual voice is important

By adopting the notion that "gifted education is just good education for everyone", are we once again looking for a one-size-fits-all solution?

Identification

As many as 90% of students nominated as gifted by untrained teachers tended to be high achieving conformists in that they were the pupils who often become bored in school but learn to use the system to get by with as little effort as possible. Betts and Neihart 1998

From Listening into Action


Children have the "right to express a view and the right to have the view given its due weight in all matters affecting the child" (Lundy 2007, p.931).

In a critique Lundy recommends that in order to be made meaningful Article 12 needs to be communicated through four separate factors:

Space: inclusive opportunity.
Voice: facilitated range of communication options.
Audience: being listened to, and
Influence: acted upon as appropriate (Lundy 2007, p. 933).

Celebrating Abilities Creativity and Achievement

What are your favourite subjects?
What is it about these subjects that you particularly like?
What ways of working or activities do you find most interesting?
Enjoyable?
Challenging?
Frustrating?
Please give your reasons.
What ways of working do you think you should have more opportunity for?
In what circumstances do you feel you do your best work?
Give examples of ways in which teachers have from your perspective
Helped you?
Helped you to help yourself?
Ensured you made progress?
Created barriers?
How could your teachers support you more?
At the moment what are your short term and long term goals for the future?
What are you doing to make sure you reach these goals?
What more if anything could the school do to support you?
Any other comments?

Revised Profiles of Students who are Gifted & Talented

1. Successful
2. Creative
3. Underground
4. At-Risk
5. Twice/Multi Exceptional
6. Autonomous

Maureen Neihart and George Betts 2010

DIGI DOCUMENTARY

The original discussions and questionnaire led to a brief digital documentary of some willing students to record further their thoughts, responses and suggestions as part of a professional development resource.

The positive response of teachers to this format and this information from the students helped me realize this may be a part of the way forward in beginning to transform thinking and practice through a reflexive approach.

Developing the gifted students’ own reflexivity using this process was an unexpected benefit and helped me to define my area of research focus.
ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Gifted in what domain?

To what level?

The whole person is greater than the sum of the parts............

How do you know what level?

- Preassess
- Most difficult task first
- Purdue rating scales
- Off level assessments
- Dynamic assessments
- Observation
- Sayler and other Checklists
- Psychological assessment
- Profiling
- Provision

In The Flow

When you, as teacher, collaborate with a gifted student in your classroom, effective cognitive development will only occur when the teaching and task difficulty are just ahead of the student’s level of cognitive development.

New relationship between teacher and learner

It means a reciprocal relationship between teacher and the intellectually gifted student needs to be created and shared and this presents many challenges. (Tomlinson 2004, c in Subban 2006, p.13)

Consider this..........

(1) At what age do students generally begin to make social comparisons?
(a) 5 (b) 7 (c) 9 (d) 11 (e) 13

(2) The ‘forced-choice dilemma’ is a conflict between:
(a) identity and intimacy
(b) achievement and empathy
(c) intimacy and achievement
(d) identity and achievement

**Differentiation**

Most differentiation, even when it is addressed, focuses on the academic needs of gifted students and overlooks their emotional needs.

Sisk (2009) suggests helping gifted students understand and accept their intensities, their perfectionism, and their need to seek balance in their lives.

More importantly, Sisk suggests that evaluation studies in gifted education should investigate the impact of such programs on students’ lives. (Shultz 2003, Sisk 2009)

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**Why Ask ?**

Individuals who are intellectually gifted are gifted because they have enhanced problem solving and metacognitive skills, understand moral issues and values at an early age, and have deep interest in the issues of learning (Fuller 1996, p.11).

Why not involve them more in co creating a better education system for themselves and everyone?

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**Resource Links**

**Professional Development**

- [http://www.mcrel.org/htm/areas/issues/learning/ges1/1k1h1.htm](http://www.mcrel.org/htm/areas/issues/learning/ges1/1k1h1.htm)
- [http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/giftedandtalented](http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/giftedandtalented)

**Checklists**


** Profiles**

- [http://www.mcrel.org/htm/areas/issues/learning/ges1/1k1h1.htm](http://www.mcrel.org/htm/areas/issues/learning/ges1/1k1h1.htm)

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**Improving the Quality of Education for All** (IQEA)

**The Central area of focus is: the quality of the students’ experience.**

- collaboration,
- voice
- inquiry

in order to change paradigms

Therefore it is not about one place, the mixed ability classroom, educating gifted students, it is a system of education “implementing a multilevel, multi-modal curriculum that can meet the needs of a heterogeneous population”

(Supran-Viars, 1999 in Campbell et al 2005 p.65)

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**Student Voice**


**Digistories**

- [http://www.digitales.us/resources/seven_steps.php](http://www.digitales.us/resources/seven_steps.php)

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**Purdue Subject specific Rating scales**


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