

# Newsletter

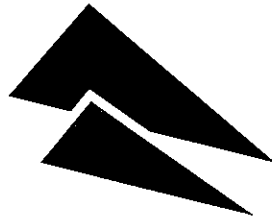
Volume 23

## The Leading Edge

FOR GIFTED EDUCATION IN B.C.

The Association of the  
Educators for the Gifted,  
Talented and Creative  
Children of B.C.

B.C.T.F.



Summer/Fall 2006

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This spring, I facilitated two sessions for the New Teachers' Conference, one of my favourite conferences. In one of the sessions I had three moms of gifted children. Each had a different story to tell. They lived in three different school districts with their children enrolled at three different grade levels.

One mom wanted to increase her understanding of differentiated instruction in the classroom. She was also a new teacher. Her experience with her child's school has been positive because each teacher at the school was willing (and able) to meet her child's needs. This happened without an Individual Education Plan, extra funding or additional resources. The classroom teacher found a way to meet the academically diverse needs of her students. A differentiated approach seems to foster continual growth where student readiness, interest and learning profiles drive the learning, rather than curriculum content.

The second mom was struggling to achieve a change in her child's learning environment to one where options are designed to be respectful of kids, hands-on, engaging and thought-provoking. The starting point for her is to find a learning environment which would challenge her highly able child and which would ensure all the students in the class got best practice instruction.

The third mom was angry at the lack of support for her child in the school. As a parent, her experience was one of continual excuses - no program, no resources, no support. Frustrated by her circumstances and wanting a satisfactory education for her child, she shared her story with the other parents and heard a different perspective from each.

The reality of these three moms' accounts represents what is happening for many gifted children in districts around the province. All too often the individual needs of gifted students are ignored. Sometimes schools that strive for excellence do little to assure the achievement of their brightest students. Because the brightest students are ignored in many schools, we are requesting all schools remain true to their vision and serve the exceptional needs of gifted learners.

What can schools do to help these students when they really care, but don't have the funds?

1. Pre-assess gifted students before a unit or course for mastery of the subject matter and offer a more advanced unit or course.
2. Provide self-contained classes for gifted students, particularly in core curriculum classes to help move on to more advanced subjects.
3. Multi-age, self-contained gifted classes are even more effective. Learning with intellectual peers encourages gifted students to greater achievement.
4. Subject acceleration is appropriate when a student is highly proficient in a particular subject.
5. Consider grade acceleration when a student demonstrates abilities well beyond expectations for a particular grade level.
6. Create a school culture that values intellectual discovery and achievements, where students encourage one another to accomplish more than they would on their own.
7. Encourage administrators and teachers to educate themselves on the wide range of exceptional abilities among bright students, and increase flexibility in addressing the individual learning needs of gifted students.
8. We must all lobby at every level for adequate funding to support all special needs students, and to foster the understanding that giftedness IS a special need.

We all hope you enjoy this edition of THE LEADING EDGE. Many thanks to Lannie Kanevsky for her contributed article. Look for more in upcoming issues.

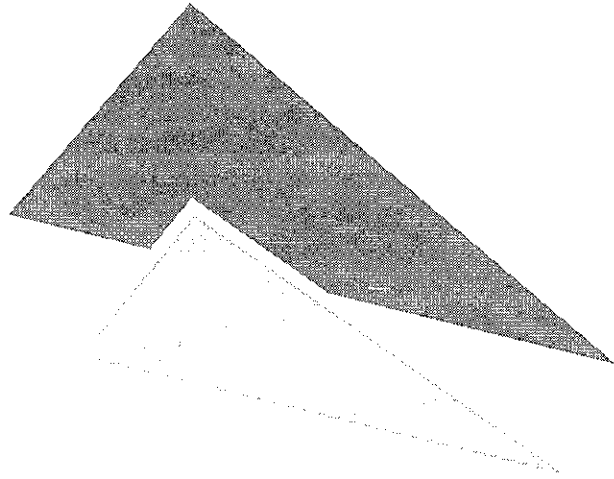
Plan to join us this October in Vancouver for "Gifted Ed 2006" with Marcia Imbeau. (See inside for more conference information.)

Enjoy your summer and I hope to see you in October.

Charlene Watts, President

**Dr. Marcia Imbeau  
“Diverse Learners:  
A Look at Differentiation”**

- A Look at Differentiation
- Getting to Know Your Kids
- Preparing the Learning Environment
- Differentiating Content
- Differentiating Process
- Differentiating Products
- Management Issues/Strategies for Implementation
- Guides for Planning Differentiated Instruction



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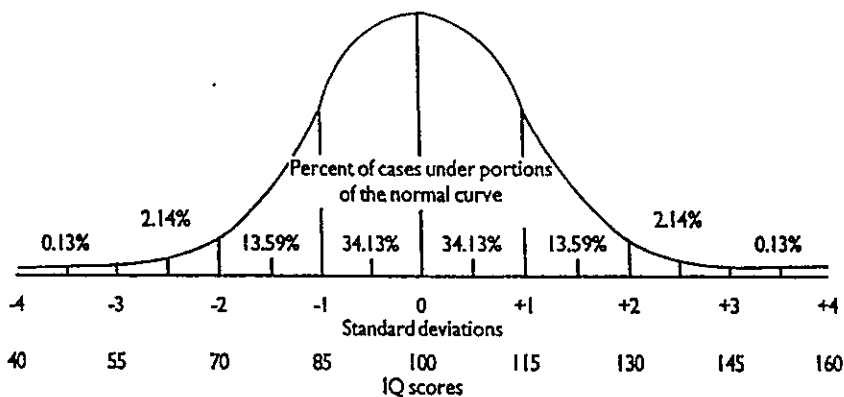
**October  
20<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

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## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

### Where's the Shame?

If you want a conversation stopper for your next staff meeting or in school Pro-D day, try this: "Students with gifted abilities are 2-5% of a school population. How much are we doing in our school for gifted students?" Then follow up with: "Do we do as much for gifted students as we do for students with learning deficits?"



THE THEORETICAL CURVE OF DISTRIBUTION OF INTELLIGENCE

We know the responses you will hear. They will range from denial to provision of money. Those are responses but they sure aren't answers. If we provided as little service for students with learning deficits as we provide for students with gifted abilities we would be condemned in the media. There would be shock, shame and blame. So where is the outrage for students at the other end of the ability spectrum?

We know that behaviour is the result of basic needs met or not met. Sometimes little attention is paid to students with gifted abilities until there are behaviour problems (ask the alternate schools). What happened to "an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure"? Maybe it disappeared with the advent of the metric system.

We have as much empathy for students who are struggling to learn as we do for gifted students who are struggling to cope. Why isn't there an equity of service? Your editors have been working with gifted learners for a combined total of nearly 50 years. We know that every bit of service gained is a battle in bureaucracy.

So ... join the struggle. Copy the article on parent advocacy in this newsletter and pass it on to parents. Start or go to meetings of groups to support gifted education. We know you are busy and overwhelmed with work ... but if you help one child ...? Our school systems need to serve all children. That's equity. For gifted learners, it won't come unless parents and teachers make it happen.

*Patricia Clough & Leslie Lowe*

## GIFTED LEARNERS AND BILL 33

If you read Hansard, it's great to know that some of our MLA's (Jenny Kwan for one) do talk about the needs of gifted learners. We wish all legislators understood the diversity of learners and needs in our classrooms. However ...

A worrying aspect of Bill 33 is the statement that "no more than 3 students on IEP's" will be placed in any one class. While we can encourage such thinking for most special needs students, we are concerned about the implications of this "two-edged sword" for our gifted learners. We know that educational research fully supports the "clustering" of more than three gifted students in a classroom. Will the absolute numbers stated in this Bill preclude offering this valuable learning environment to students? If we insist on the ability to cluster gifted students, will that insistence result in gifted students NOT having their special education needs outlined and addressed in IEP's? While the government has made "baby steps" forward in its awareness of class composition issues, we think they need a lot more information about the nature and purpose of IEP's. If gifted students with IEP's won't figure in the count, can we take it that once again gifted kids and their needs DON'T COUNT either?

# Choice: A Way to Share Responsibility for Differentiating Curriculum

by Lannie Kanevsky

**T**eachers new to gifted education often feel it is their responsibility to do all of the work when it comes to adjusting core curricula to challenge their gifted students. Sharing control over the differentiation process with students is as easy as offering students choices. The benefits of giving students a role in the design process include more personalized activities for each of your students, enhanced motivation, increased engagement and motivation mean fewer off-task behaviours to manage. It also reduces the pressure on the teacher to find the “right way” to modify an activity.

## Rationale

All students in all grades can and should be given opportunities to choose important features of classroom tasks. As Kohn pointed out, “If we want children to take responsibility for their own behaviour, we must first give them responsibility.” (1993, 11) He found that individuals who experience a sense of self-determination are better emotionally adjusted, more motivated to learn, work harder, and earn higher scores on standardized tests.

Making significant decisions about classroom learning experiences has additional implications and benefits for gifted students. These are the students most likely to overwhelm themselves with possibilities and then get stuck. How can they choose?! Choosing is an acquired skill, and the classroom is a great place to learn it. It is also a great way for gifted students to learn to describe optimal and preferred conditions for their learning.

## Research

A number of recent studies have shown gifted students want and need choices. Kanevsky & Kay (1998) found choosing features of learning activities was more important to more gifted students than it was to non-gifted students in third through eighth grades. Similarly, when Clementson and Wenger (1999) interviewed nearly 200 high school senior scholarship finalists, these students

felt schools should offer students “more voice and more choice”. Once given responsibility for the design of creative projects, students in Delcourt’s (1993) study were more intrinsically motivated (eager to learn for the joy of understanding rather than grades). It isn’t only high achieving students who seek these experiences. The gifted under-achievers in Keighley’s (1996) study identified a lack of choice as a key feature of the boredom they experienced in school. From a teacher’s perspective, Hughes (1999) found that giving gifted students options was an effective technique for meeting the needs of high-ability students in mixed ability classrooms (Hughes, 1999).

Table 1. Examples of content, process, product and learning environment options of student choices.

Curriculum Element and Definition	Let Students Select the....	Possibilities
Content Knowledge or skill(s) to be developed	Topic, content, skill, social issue or moral dilemma	astronomy, cat whiskers, medieval saddlery, Mozart, tessellation patterns, structures, relationships, systems; Website development, painting with acrylics, interviewing techniques, desktop publishing; endangered species, poverty, prejudice, population growth, pollution.
Process How the content will be learned or explored	Verbs, roles	analyze (break into parts), evaluate (judging, monitoring), or create (design, hypothesize)* Track the weather as a meteorologist, a commercial pilot or a farmer.
Product Evidence of learning	Nature of the product, audience, evaluation criteria, evaluator, outcome, evaluator(s)	poster, play, oral report, poem, dance, model, letter to the editor of a local newspaper; one or more experts, classmates, teacher, publisher; creativity, practicality, cost, quality, punctuality, completeness; constructive feedback, score, pass/incomplete, letter grade; expert, self, peers, teacher.
Learning Environment Physical and psychological features of where the student learns, with whom, what and when	Location, learning partners, instructor or mentor, resources, production resources, time	studio, classroom, local college or university, public or other library, online, lab, homework; solo, partnered or grouped; professional, parent, teacher, hobbyist; web-based materials, books, maps, videos, fiction, poetry, art, authentic tools and materials used by professionals, materials available in school library; duration (minutes, days, weeks in school), after school, weekends.

\*These verbs represent the top three levels of Anderson & Krathwohl’s (2001) update of Bloom’s Taxonomy. Their version comes with many teacher-friendly ideas for teaching and assessment.

## Creating Student Opportunities for Choices

The number and extent of the choices gifted students make should first be explored to their expertise in choice making. This is not necessarily a function of age or intelligence. Some very responsible, self-aware, articulate primary students can be very clear about features of their optimal learning activities. They would be considered intermediate or expert choosers. Come highly gifted secondary students have had very limited or bad experiences planning their learning in and out of school. They may be paralyzed by the

initiation to do what they want. In this case, when it comes to learning-related choices, they are novices.

Trust and risk-taking are closely intertwined with the choices made by students and teachers. Until students trust a teacher, they often feel they risk making the wrong choice, one that will displease the teacher. They see choosing as yet another way to please their teacher rather than pleasing themselves. Teachers can also feel that they are giving up control when their students' activity begins to scatter - according to their choices - even

when the assignments (choices) were designed by the teacher. Choosing to give students more control takes courage, but it's worth it. If a teacher appears to trust students' ability to make decisions, they will have more confidence and may experiment with more creative or challenging tasks.

Table 1 provides a collection of possible choices related to each of the basic elements of an activity (content, process, product and learning environment). The sidebar describes practical ways to give students choices of varying sizes. Begin with choices in

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## SAMPLE CHOICES

### SMALL CHOICES

Small choices give students control over one element of any lesson.

- Rather than requiring students do every problem on a math worksheet, let them choose whether they'd like to do all of the odd-numbered problems or all of the even.
- Let students decide whether they would like to work alone, with a partner, or in a group.
- Let students decide whether they would rather revise their own work or that of a classmate.

### MEDIUM-SIZED CHOICES

Medium-sized choices affect lessons that last more than a day, up to a week.

- Have students generate three criteria for evaluating a project of investigation while the teacher generates an additional three.
- Learning centers are most common in elementary classrooms. In Challenge Centers (Heacox, 2002) students choose single or multi-day tasks to extend and enrich core content.
- Let students select the next novel for a literature or author study.
- Investigate the impacts of an oil spill as an environmentalist, a tour operator, a marine biologist, or the CEO of the oil company whose oil has spilled.

### BIG CHOICES

Big choices affect learning across weeks and usually in the form of projects and investigations. The teacher can either provide a Project Menu (Heacox, 2001), a core activity with options, or allow students to design their own learning experiences.

**Project Menu:** The teacher maintains responsibility for generating all aspects of two or more optional activities. Assignments differ systematically. For example, they might vary according to the level of Bloom's Taxonomy or the Multiple Intelligence(s) involved. The list can be used as options for a required project related to a unit, as alternative learning activities when a student has already mastered the concepts and skills addressed in the lessons offered to the rest of the class, or as a collection of possibilities that all students choose from at particular times during your unit (Menu Days).

**Core Plus Options:** The teacher determines three (or fewer) elements (content,

process, product, learning environment) of a core curriculum activity and lets students choose from options for the fourth. For example, if the class is studying the Civil War, each student can contribute to an edition of a daily newspaper during the War. The teacher has determined the general content (events of the Civil War), the process (classroom, on-line, and library research), and learning environment (work alone using materials available in the school and on-line). Self and teacher evaluation will be based on a rubric. Students chose their individual products from the following options: editorial, letter to the editor, political cartoon, or a news article reported from a battle zone.

**Student-designed Activities:** These can be very exciting and powerful. Students design a project in which they determine every thing, or almost everything. Two ways to accomplish this are described below but many more are available (for example, Burns, 1980; Draz, 1986, 1993; Heacox, 2001; Schack & Starko, 1998). A teacher needs to find an approach that offers the types of structure and flexibility best suited to her or his style, subject matter and setting, as well as student needs. This may require some experimenting.

Kanevsky (1999) designed a procedure that begins with a lengthy survey, the "Possibilities for Learning". The items on the form enable students to identify their favourite features of curriculum content, process, product, and learning environment. Each option on the survey is based on one of Maker and Neilson's (1996) curriculum differentiation strategies for gifted learners. Student favourites become the ingredients to create an activity on a Dream Sheet. These and other support materials structure students wondering or creative production projects.

In Renzulli's (1977) approach, students design Type III Activities using the Management Plan for Individual and Small Group Investigations. The process of completing this form requires students to focus their interests, specify the methods and activities to be undertaken, and describe the intended product and audience. Rals & Schack (1993) have described a 12-step process for encouraging independent learning and creative productivity based on these materials. They lead the teacher and students from interests through planning, monitoring and evaluation. But don't be deceived by the phrase independent study. No matter how capable and no matter who designed the project, students should be able to depend on the teacher's support when they are wrestling with big ideas and sophisticated skills and technologies. If they can complete an entire project without assistance, the developmental impact of their work may be small or non-existent.

small activities within a day's lessons, increasing to larger activities that continue across two or three class periods. Work up to letting students design major projects.

### Learning to Choose

All gifted students are not great decision-makers. Those who are, expect opportunities to use that ability in their classrooms. Those who are not, need to develop it or their learning will always be limited to activities designed by others. Inexperienced or wary decision-makers need time to learn to make good choices related to their learning. In this stage, students learn to choose from a limited number of options. Start with two. Gradually increase the number of options from two to three, three to four and then add none of the above. None of the above means students propose their own option and negotiate the specifics with the teacher. Explain the options and answer any questions students have about each one. Then give students a comfortable amount of time to choose depending on the complexity and duration of the options: two to ten minutes for single class choices, up to a week for project options. If one or more options involve group work, they will need time to collect a group. Group building can be required before committing to a group activity.

### Managing Choice

Put time limits on choosing. Some choices require a few days for exploring (project choices); others need minutes (e.g., odds or evens on a math worksheet). Once choosing time is up, students must live with their choices. Limit "It depends" conversations with gifted students. They can go on forever. The teacher should listen carefully during student choice making, speaking only to respond to questions. Students should come to their decisions with a minimum of teacher intervention. If students can't decide because two or more options look equally good, leave choice to chance. If there are only two, toss a coin. When there are more than two, put the numbers of the

attractive options in a bag and draw one. Students can learn to do this for themselves before time runs out. If relying on chance is not appropriate, the teacher may say, "You can do both, eventually, but which would you like to do first?" Students can be advised of a default option teacher's choice. Let them know in advance that by not making a choice of their own within the time limit, they have actually made a decision to let the teacher decide. This is useful when choosing time has run out, it's time to move on with the learning, and a student or two won't choose because all of the options look "bad" or they are just procrastinating.

Keeping the number of options small simplifies the teacher's monitoring and evaluation tasks. If students do not like what they have chosen, talk about it. A great deal can be learned from a bad choice, and frustration can sometimes stimulate wonderful creative problem solving. Resist changing student choices unless there is an exceptionally good reason. Balance the amount of teacher and student control in each day, week and unit of study. "Every day ought to include at least one block of time in which children can decide what to do." (Kohn, 1993, 13).

### Conclusion

Small choices can make big differences in student achievement, engagement and intrinsic motivation (Cordova & Lepper, 1996; Delcourt, 1993). The most powerful choices we can offer gifted students in the classroom are those that enable them to integrate their strengths and passions into their learning. This article has focussed on choice in core curriculum, but teachers can also involve students in interest or passion driven learning, in determining the appearance of the classroom, in setting behaviour expectations, and in event planning or fund-raising. The possibilities are endless. Collaborating with gifted students in the curriculum design process is a terrific place to start.

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## LOUDER THAN MY CHILD - A Parents View of Advocacy

*by Sari Cox, Armstrong, BC*

I have a survival tactic - I pick my battles. But, there is one I never cease fighting - I advocate for my gifted child so that she will survive her school years and emerge into society as a well-balanced and happy adult. While cooperation with teachers and school boards is by far the ideal way to ensure that the needs of a gifted learner are met, each school year brings a new crop of challenges and parents must continually steel themselves for a long battle. Luckily, the tactics for winning these battles are remarkably simple and effective.

The first and best tactic is to 'Be Informed'. When parents of newly identified gifted children approach me I always load them up with website links and books so that they can totally immerse themselves in the subject of giftedness and what makes their kid 'tick'. Knowledge is power. Often these kids' incessant thirst for knowledge makes them extremely perplexing to live with. Parents are usually relieved to receive a page from a 'how to' manual, so to speak.

The second tactic is to 'Teach the Teacher'. Informed parents easily relate to the challenges that lie ahead for an under-informed teacher. Parents understand the situation with large class sizes and we sympathize with the difficulty of accommodating all special needs into the everyday class. But, because we ARE informed, we know that the outfall from unmet needs of the gifted child can be disruptive to the class, or at worst, catastrophic to the child. While most teachers want to help, many are too busy to tackle 'one more thing'. I recommend that parents offer to assist the teacher by providing information on giftedness, ideas on alternative teaching techniques, and above all, patient understanding. I also recommend to parents that they work with the teacher to develop an IEP so that there is a specific plan spelled out at the very least, in the child's best interest.

The third most useful tactic is for parents to form alliances with other parents. The primary benefit is the peer support from someone who has 'been there'. Groups like the Gifted Children's Association of BC provide an extensive support network for parents, and their Local Member Groups supplement educational needs by planning events where children can enjoy interaction with their emotional and intellectual peers, regardless of age and free of institutional structure.

The fourth tactic is for parent groups to form alliances with teachers, school district officials and elected trustees. With the right combination of diplomacy, perseverance, and yes, even political sabre-rattling, a relationship of respect between a parent group and the school board can move mountains. The pen may be mightier than the sword, but under the right conditions a room full of passionate parents trumps a lineup of determined trustees. There is definitely strength in numbers. The beauty of this tactic is that it can set up a culture within the school district where programs for gifted learners are viewed as both critical and permanent.

Above all, parents must understand that they have rights, and with their children as customers of the School District, they deserve to be heard on the topic of their child's education. Parents will go to extreme lengths to protect their child's physical safety. Some will go to those same extremes to protect their child's emotional well-being. Have I ever had to get 'louder than my child' in advocating for her? Thankfully, no. I am lucky to be part of a parent group that has an incredible relationship with our School District, but I'm also fairly sure there are a few district employees who hate seeing any one of us darkening their doorway.

Parent participation is key to providing services for students with gifted abilities.

Sari Cox is the president of one of the G.C. parent groups in S.D. 83.

## "OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIFTED KIDS"

The following is an article by Diana Strandberg which appeared in the TRI-CITY NEWS on May 12, 2006. The article describes SHARP, a program which supports gifted learners in School District #43. We continue to seek out innovative and creative ways to assist the gifted in our districts, and sharing our efforts helps to inspire and encourage others in that endeavour. Please consider submitting a "one-pager" which briefly outlines the services you provide for gifted students. THE LEADING EDGE would be happy to showcase it in upcoming issues.

Gifted kids are working together on special projects with the support of regular classroom teachers who get training and resources. As a result, they don't feel isolated and can challenge each other on topics of shared interest, said Murray Peters, gifted education co-ordinator for School District 43.

In a presentation to school trustees Tuesday, Peters said about 100 gifted children in Grades 3 to 8 are being clustered in groups of three to six students in SHARP (Students of High Ability in the Regular Program), which is cost effective and mentally stimulating for students. A video backing his claim had local kids saying clustering stopped them from being bored in class and gave them opportunities to do fun and interesting projects with peers. Although SHARP has been around since 2003, new training is enabling more teachers to get involved in the program.

The idea is to provide gifted children with a comfortable and accepting classroom environment in which teachers acknowledge and provide for the unique gifts of students.

The result, according to SHARP philosophy and goals ([www2.sd43.bc.ca/gifted/Gifted\\_Ed\\_SHARP.htm](http://www2.sd43.bc.ca/gifted/Gifted_Ed_SHARP.htm)) should not only help gifted students and stop them from dropping out but improve achievement of other students.

Peters also updated the board on other initiatives for gifted students, including challenge centres for Grade 3, 4 and 5 students who get to work on special projects such as medieval studies, writing workshops and movie making, and middle magnet workshops, where middle school students get 12 half-day sessions to work on math, art, creative problem-solving and technology projects. At the secondary level, the district is hosting a conference for Grade 9 students to develop their own education plans based on their interests and passions, and a Grade 9 pilot project at Gleneagle called Talons, where self-learning will be used and integration of subjects for programs such as leadership, community services and outdoor studies will be promoted.



## HIGH POTENTIAL CLASS

After 8 years of teaching the multi-aged gifted class in Salmon Arm, Leslie Lowe left the classroom to undertake the challenge of coordinating gifted programmes in our district. Corrie Goessman was hired to teach the class and the following article tells a little of her experiences after "One Year in the High Potential Class".

"Eleven students, ten boys and one girl, how hard can a high potential class be?" I remembered having this thought as I received the position as the new teacher of the Gifted class ... I was so mistaken.

My school year has concluded with learning some personal teaching discoveries. The first, is that although in theory, I fully grasped that the High Potential students learned concepts with only one or two repetitions I was not prepared for the speed at which I was going to have to move through and beyond the curriculum. Our grade six French units were completed by the end of term two. By the middle of October the math text seemed boring and repetitive. I learned quickly to teach big idea concepts through which smaller themes were learned. Every student in the class worked independently on their own personal projects at the same time as regular daily activities just so that there was never anyone with "nothing to do". Still now at the end of May I feel I am only about one week ahead of the students in my class.

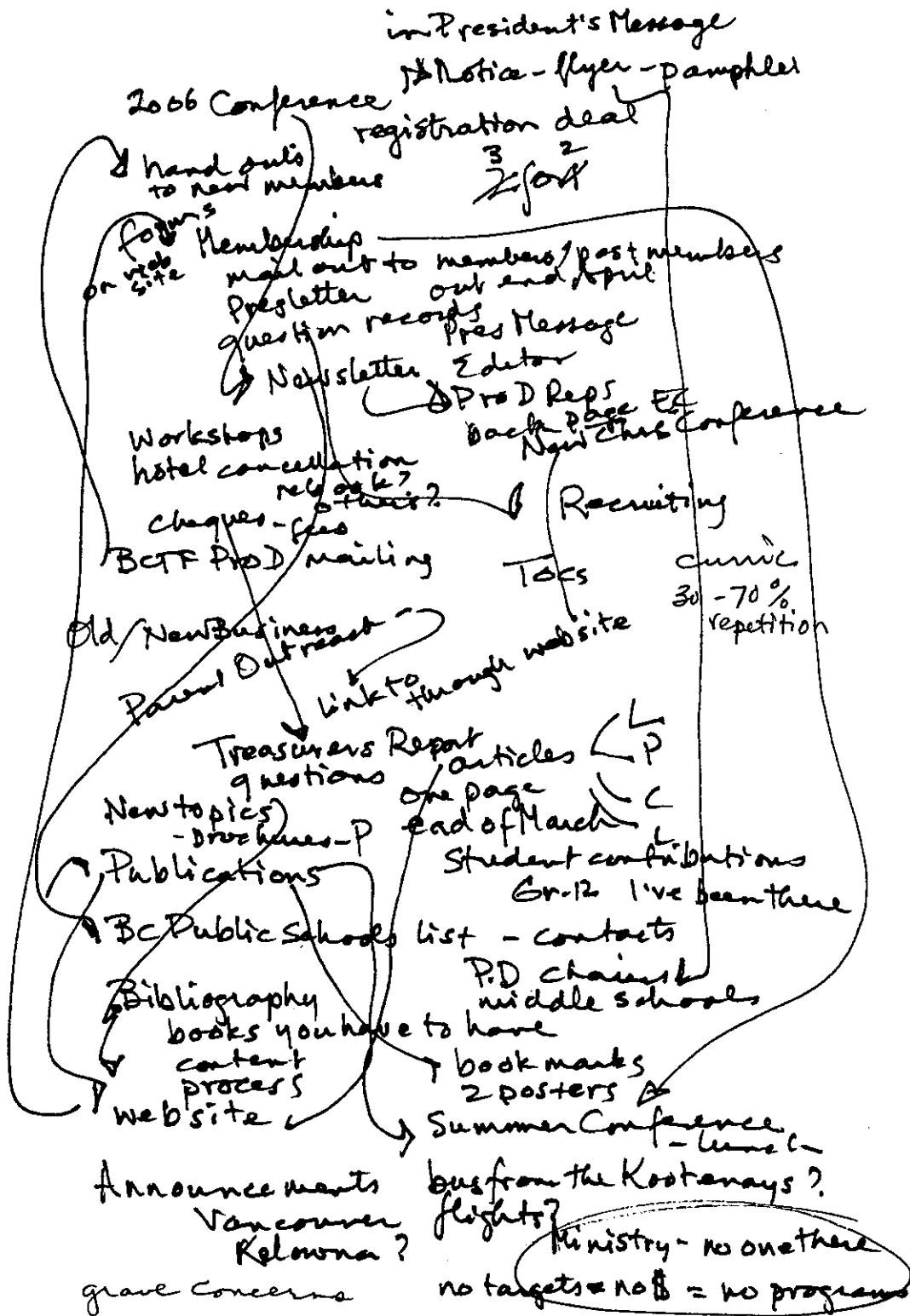
My second major discovery was that I learned to abandon all my previous conceptions about age and grade level being equivalent to skill and ability. How can a grade 4 student be doing a book report on the Science Encyclopedia regarding the structure of human DNA but be unable to remember that every Tuesday is library or be unable to find his own pack out of the 11 that are hanging on our class hooks? I stopped teaching to the grade and started to develop units with the students. Every unit we did in our class incorporated multiple levels of talents and skills. These units then assisted the students in creatively demonstrating what they had learned while at the same time building on skills that some of them lacked. This balance between strengthening positive attributes and building on common school survival skills is the on-going struggle with teaching high potential students.

I knew that I have always wanted to work with students in an environment that was different from the regular school and the "normal" classroom. I just did not know what I was getting myself into with the High Potential class. Although I have never worked harder at teaching and I have required a great deal of help from mentors like Leslie Lowe I have had the best year of my life. Our class is the only one in Salmon Arm with 62 exact rules for tag, where class meetings can take up to an hour even with a talking stick and the students are the tightest group of friends anyone could ask for. It has been a pleasure and an honour to learn from the High Potential students this year.

*Corrie Goessman*

# MINUTES OF A PSA EXECUTIVE MEETING

We asked our hard-working secretary, Teri Sobo, to write us a little blurb explaining how she converts the "random" and sometimes "abstract" conversations and interactions that occur at AEGTCCBC Executive meetings. The wonderful thing is that she then converts what you see below into clear, concise and intelligent minutes? If you feel you could be comfortable doing the job in such an environment, we'd like to hear from you, as Teri is retiring this year.



## MINI-GRANT APPLICATION

Again this year, the AEGTCCBC is providing up to six (6) mini-grants in the amount of \$200 or less to support innovative ideas that promote gifted education in schools and benefit gifted children.

The grants are intended to help fund projects that provide direct support for programs and/or materials for gifted children. However, ideas that indirectly benefit gifted children will also be considered. Applicants must be AEGTCCBC members.

Grant recipients will be announced at the annual Gifted Ed Conference in October, 2006. A one page "Show and Tell" recap of the project will be due at the conclusion of the project.

Applications must be postmarked by September 30, 2006.

### MINI-GRANT APPLICATION

#### Applicant Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone W \_\_\_\_\_ H \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Role (teacher, administrator, coordinator, other) \_\_\_\_\_

#### School Information

School District \_\_\_\_\_ School(s) \_\_\_\_\_

School Address \_\_\_\_\_

School Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students who will benefit from this grant \_\_\_\_\_

#### Description (please be brief, but include necessary information)

1. Describe the innovative ideas you wish to implement. Be as specific as possible and include such details as the dates of activities and roles of any persons working on the project/activity.
2. Describe how the project/activity will promote gifted education and benefit gifted students.
3. Describe how you will evaluate whether or not you and/or the students achieved the goals of the project and benefited from the activity.
4. Include a budget. Presuming you receive \$200.00 from AEGTCCBC, list proposed expenditures. Please be specific.
5. I agree to submit a report at the conclusion of the project.

Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail before September 30, 2006 to:**  
Patricia Clough or Leslie Lowe, North Okanagan Teachers' Association  
Box 187, Salmon Arm, B.C. V1E 4N3

## MIDDLE SCHOOLS FOR GIFTED!

I recently came upon an article entitled, "What makes a great middle school?" Among the suggestions were these two statements:

- no ability grouping
- wide use of co-operative learning

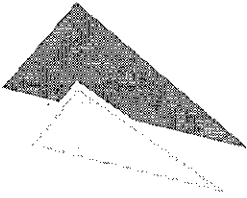
As an advocate for learners with gifted abilities, I felt the first stirring of concern (actually panic; I rouse easily).

No ability grouping - were our gifted children never to have an opportunity to work with their gifted peers? Co-operative learning - marvelous strategies - but the key is learning. How much learning happens for gifted students in homogeneous co-operative learning situations? We need to ensure learning for all students - otherwise it will be a recipe for frustration soup.

In our school district there will be a solution. At Shuswap Middle School, there will be a clustered group of identified gifted students in a multi-age 6/7 class with a CORE teacher assigned to them. The process of coming to this resolution spurred us to make middle schools one focus of this fall's Gifted Education Conference including a handout on curricular Emphasis at the Middle School Level.

We hope you will come and share.

### **"REMEMBER OUR WEBSITE"**



The Leading Edge for Gifted Education  
**The Association of  
Educators of Gifted, Talented  
and Creative Children of B.C.**

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