Supporting and Promoting Advanced Readiness in Kids
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FINDING STRAND RESOURCES
Strand Goals

- To share the background, structure, and purpose of Project SPARK and its foundation in the Young Scholars Model
- To discuss key elements of the Young Scholars Model and its implementation in various settings
- To explore questions and dilemmas related to early identification and response to advanced potential
- To practice strategies for recognizing and responding to advanced potential in diverse populations

Project SPARK: Supporting and Promoting Advanced Readiness in Kids

- Focus on early awareness/identification/intervention to support high potential
- Emphasis at grades K-2 in schools with high populations from underserved groups
- Application/scaling up of the Young Scholars Model in 4 Connecticut school districts
  - Access to advanced learning opportunities
  - Affirmation of high academic potential
  - Advocates for students

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GBRS

Contains 4 categories:

- Exceptional Ability to Learn
- Exceptional Application of Knowledge
- Exceptional Creative/Productive Thinking
- Exceptional Motivation to Succeed
Other Observation Scales

- TOPS (Coleman et al.)
- Renzulli Scales (SRBCSS; Renzulli & Smith)
- Gifted Rating Scales (GRS; Pfeiffer & Jarosewich)

GRS

- Was developed by Steven Pfeiffer and Tania Jarosewich
- Includes indicators that recognize and value teacher pleasing and non-teacher pleasing high potential behaviors
- Aligns with National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Standards
GRS

Contains 6 categories:

- Intellectual Ability
- Academic Ability
- Creativity
- Artistic Talent
- Leadership
- Motivation

Ratings

Each category is assigned a rating based on the quality of behaviors observed:

1 - 3  Below Average
4 - 6  Average
7 - 9  Above Average

Ratings are based on how the child compares with other children of the same age.
## Intellectual Ability

- Solves problems quickly
- Demonstrates advanced reasoning skills
- Thinks insightfully, intuitively understands problems
- Learns new information quickly
- Demonstrates a good memory, remembers facts and details
- Understands complex information or abstract ideas
- Answers questions in detail, with extensive information
- Makes logical inferences, draws conclusions based on sound reasoning
- Problem solves analytically, separates problems into their component parts
- Understands the essence of a problem quickly
- Applies prior knowledge to solving problems
- Learns difficult concepts quickly

## Academic Ability

- Demonstrates knowledge about current events
- Completes academic work correctly
- Completes academic work unassisted
- Contributes to academic discussions
- Learns academic material with little instruction
- Excels in one or more subject areas
- Understands complicated academic material
- Performs well on achievement and/or classroom tests
- Demonstrates advanced reading, writing, and/or math skills
- Asks relevant questions to learn more about a topic
- Demonstrates extensive knowledge in one or more academic areas
- Demonstrates knowledge of facts in one or more academic areas
How do we work with teachers to move away from a perspective that a child who acts out in class cannot be gifted?

**KEY POINT OF TENSION**

Committed Professionals

The greatest barrier to learning is not what the student knows, but what the teacher believes!

Dr. Wade Nobles
Challenge Deficit Thinking

Focus on areas of strength

Provide scaffolding and extra support to promote achievement and success

Response Lessons

• Used to “draw out” gifted behaviors
• Allows for critical and creative thinking
• Aligns with GBRS
What Works

GT resource teacher teaches a lesson and the classroom teacher observes and takes notes.

Classroom teacher teaches a lesson and the GT resource teacher observes and takes notes.

The two teachers discuss and share observations.

Critical and Creative Thinking Strategies

**Visualization**
- Consciously forming the mental images of something that is not actually present in the senses.

**Plus, Minus, Interesting**
- Framing the consideration of positive, negative, and intriguing aspects of an idea into one picture.

**Encapsulation**
- Stating ideas in precise and concise form.

**Questioning**
- Actively clarifying, exploring, challenging, and assessing the understanding of ideas.

**Point of View**
- Analyzing how different people might look at the same idea and/or situation.

**Decisions & Outcomes**
- Understanding that choosing from alternatives affects events which follow.

**Analogies**
- Comparing two items in order to perceive similarities.

**Mind Mapping**
- Recording information and supporting ideas and examples branching out from the main idea.

**Fluency, Originality, Flexibility & Elaboration**
- The production of many ideas, the expansion of new ideas, and the recombination of existing ideas.

From FCPS AAP
Critical and Creative Thinking....what do those terms mean?

- Critical Thinking
- Creative Thinking

Critical and Creative Thinking are interrelated processes essential to problem solving.

Creative thinking involves constructing something new.

Critical thinking involves logic and reasoning skills.

As we solve problems, we navigate between both thinking patterns across all disciplines.
• A facility for working with analogies gives students a structure for generating creative ideas, seeing complex relationships, and making unusual comparisons.

• Analogies may be used to deepen understanding of topics or concepts.
Sample Lesson: Colorful Categories

Lesson Features to Note

• Critical/Creative Thinking Strategy Icon
• Behaviors to Observe
• Additional emphases related to strategies, behaviors, access for language learners, etc.
Additional Sample Lessons

• In a group, explore your sample lesson. Consider the following (to share with the group):
  – How does the lesson encourage students to demonstrate evidence of advanced potential?
  – To what degree and in what proportion of students would you expect to see the indicated behaviors?
  – Do you agree with the behaviors listed, or are there others from the GBRS paperwork you would expect?