

Sparking High Potential: Illuminating Young Students' Thinking

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The Challenge

- Rates of identification for gifted programs among students from traditionally underserved populations
- Need for approaches that support finding high potential across demographic groups
- Need for approaches that provide students with supports to prepare for the challenges of advanced programs
- Recommendations around early intervention, yet limited programming



Underrepresentation of Economically Disadvantaged and Culturally Diverse Students Issues and Recommendations

Biased assessment measures

- Multidimensional assessments
- Portfolios, case studies, anecdotal records

Low expectations (self and others)

- Raise expectations through more rigorous and challenging curriculum

Few parent/guardian referrals

- Increase communication
- Teacher referrals
- Parent advocacy training



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Project SPARK: Supporting and Promoting Advanced Readiness in Kids

- Focus on **early identification of high potential**
- **Intervention to promote achievement**
- Emphasis on students in grades K-2, particularly those students from groups **traditionally underserved in gifted programs**.
 - students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - students from low-income backgrounds
- Application/scaling up of the Young Scholars Model (Advanced Academic Programs [AAP] Office, 2013; Horn, 2014)



Benefits for Schools and Students

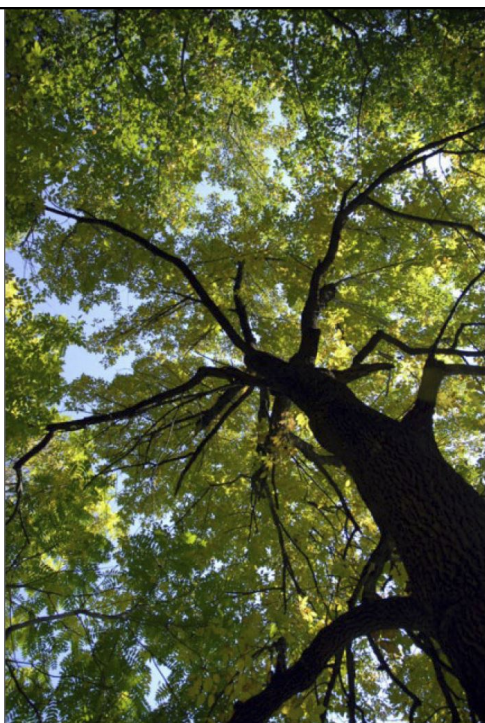
- Increased identification of and services to students of high potential from all populations, and especially to those from underserved groups.
- Intended support for students:
 - *access* to support and advanced learning experiences
 - *affirmation* of their potential and effort
 - *advocates* who will help to ensure their potential is developed (AAP Office, 2013, p. 15).
- Professional development support for school staff





Short Term

To *identify* students who may not be considered for advanced academic programs using traditional methods of identification, and who, without that opportunity, are less likely to pursue advanced levels of learning on their own.



Long Term

To *nurture* high academic potential at an early age so that students who have historically been underserved in advanced academic programs will be *prepared to engage* in *challenging* subject matter and *rigorous courses* in upper elementary school, middle school, and high school.

Identifying Potential

- Observe your students
- Give them opportunities for higher levels thinking and open-ended tasks including Response Lessons.
- Take notes of behaviors and keep work samples
- Use the Gifted Behavior Rating Scale as a tool to rate and record exceptional behaviors

GBRS

- Was developed by FCPS using current research on behaviors that demonstrate academic strengths
- Includes indicators that recognize and value cultural differences
- Aligns with National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Standards

GIFTED BEHAVIORS RATING SCALE WITH COMMENTARY <small>Review each category and the list of descriptors. Assign an overall rating using the scale below. The ratings range from 1 (rarely) to 4 (consistently). Add the four scores and place the sum in the total box.</small>		Student Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____ ID # _____ Completed By _____	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> Total
1 = rarely 2 = occasionally 3 = frequently 4 = consistently			
Exceptional Ability to Learn <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; float: right;"></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibits exceptional memory <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates in-depth knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Displays persistent, intense focus on one or more topics <input type="checkbox"/> Is highly reflective and/or sensitive to his/her environment <input type="checkbox"/> Learns and adapts readily to new cultures <input type="checkbox"/> Learns quickly and easily <input type="checkbox"/> Acquires language at a rapid pace <input type="checkbox"/> Learns skills independently and makes connections without formal instruction 	Exceptional Creative/Productive Thinking <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; float: right;"></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sees the familiar in unusual ways / Does not conform to typical ways of thinking or perceiving <input type="checkbox"/> Is highly creative and/or inventive <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates unusual fluency and flexibility in thinking and problem-solving <input type="checkbox"/> Expresses ideas, feelings, experiences, and/or beliefs in original ways <input type="checkbox"/> Displays keen sense of humor <input type="checkbox"/> Is highly curious <input type="checkbox"/> Generates new ideas, new uses, new solutions easily <input type="checkbox"/> Perceives and manipulates patterns, colors, and/or symbols 		
Exceptional Application of Knowledge <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; float: right;"></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates highly developed reasoning <input type="checkbox"/> Employs complex problem-solving strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Uses and interprets advanced symbol systems in academics, visual arts, and/or performing arts <input type="checkbox"/> Understands, applies, transfers abstract concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Uses technology in advanced applications <input type="checkbox"/> Acts as an interpreter, translator, and/or facilitator to help others <input type="checkbox"/> Makes advanced connections and transfers learning to other subjects, situations, cultures <input type="checkbox"/> Communicates learned concepts through role playing and/or detailed artwork 	Exceptional Motivation to Succeed <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; float: right;"></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates ability to lead large and/or small groups <input type="checkbox"/> Meets exceptional personal and/or academic challenges <input type="checkbox"/> Explores, researches, and questions topics, ideas, or issues independently <input type="checkbox"/> Is poised with adults and engages them in adult conversations <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibits a strong sense of loyalty and responsibility <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates exceptional ability to adapt to new experiences <input type="checkbox"/> Strives to achieve high standards especially in areas of strength and/or interest <input type="checkbox"/> Shows initiative, self-direction, and/or high level of confidence 		
COMMENTARY: As a list on the back of this paper, please provide a profile of the student's academic strengths and abilities, citing specific examples. Commentary should include specific examples to support the GBRs rating.			

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Response Lessons

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

Thinking Strategies



Visualization



Questioning



Analogies



*Fluency, Flexibility,
Originality, Elaboration*



Point of View



*Decisions and
Outcomes*



Mindmapping



Encapsulation



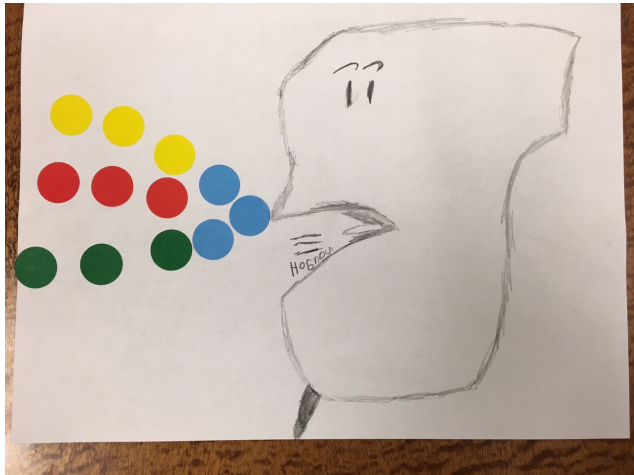
*Plus, Minus,
Interesting*

<https://www.fcps.edu/academics/elementary-school-academics-k-6/advanced-academics/critical-and-creative-thinking>

Lesson Examples

A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte





Access Lessons:

<http://spark.uconn.edu/>

Resources > Treatment School Educators

Password: *sparkle*

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