

## Identifying and Meeting the Needs of the African-American Gifted Learner

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## The Challenges

- Identification of Culturally Diverse Learners
- Language/Culturally Diverse Learner
- How to retain the Diverse Learner



### IDENTIFICATION OF THE MINORITY GIFTED

<b>AFRICAN AMERICAN</b>	<b>8.7%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>HISPANIC</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>0.006%</b>
<b>WHITE</b>	<b>87.1%</b>	<b>96%</b>
<b>ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>NATIVE AMERICANS</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.006%</b>

### African American Student

- Total Population 8.7%
- Gifted Population 3%

### Hispanic Students

- Total Population 3.1%
- Gifted Population 0.006%

### White Students

- Total Population 87.1%
- Gifted Population 96%

## DIANE RAVITCH...

**“Public schools**  
are **most successful** with students  
who are **motivated**;  
**the unmotivated** either  
**drop out or graduate without the skills**  
necessary for higher education or the  
modern workplace”

## ARE WE IDENTIFYING ALL OF OUR GIFTED?

• “The potential for academic giftedness is present in roughly equal proportions in all groups in our society”

- J.Borland, “Identifying Young, Potentially gifted, Economically disadvantaged students.” GCO 38: 164-171. Fall, 1994

There is **evidence that we have failed,**  
as a  
field, **to respond to our society’s**  
**diversity**  
by **adequately identifying and serving**  
**gifted students who are economically**  
**disadvantaged** especially students who  
are  
from **racial and ethnic minority groups**

### The National Educational longitudinal study of 8<sup>th</sup> grade programs for gifted students by the USOE (1991):

Students whose **families’**  
**socioeconomic status** places them in  
the **top quartile** of the population are  
**about 5 times more likely to be in**  
**programs for gifted students than**  
**are students from families in the**  
**bottom quartile**

### Black Family Types

- A. High  
High  
socio-economic  
well educated parents;  
numerous experiences  
self-confident; high  
aspiration.
- B. Middle socioeconomic environment;  
supportive intellectual environment in home;  
many experiences provided; self-confident; high  
aspirations
- C. Low socioeconomic, but organized, environment; parents  
have limited education; moderate or low aspirations;  
children well cared for; self-confident
- D. Very low socioeconomic environment; limited educational tradition in  
the home; generally disorganized, unsupportive home environment  
regarding intellectual pursuits; limited aspirations; low self-concept

## Type D

Very low socioeconomic environment;  
limited educational tradition in the home;  
generally disorganized, unsupportive  
home environment regarding intellectual  
pursuits; limited aspirations; low self-  
concept

## Type C

Low socioeconomic, but organized, environment; parents have limited education; moderate or low aspirations; children well cared for; self-confident

## Type B

Middle socioeconomic environment; supportive intellectual environment in home; many experiences provided; self-confident; high aspirations

## Type A

High socio-economic well educated parents; numerous experiences self-confident; high aspiration.



## Dedicated to Learners Who Are Different....

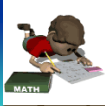
- Lower SES home environment
- Parents may have little education
- Father may be absent
- Preoccupation with survival
- Little education tradition in the home
- Parents hold high aspirations for children to succeed in school
- Aspirations of children narrow and limited

"THERE IS SOMETHING THAT IS MUCH MORE SCARCE, SOMETHING RARER THAN ABILITY. IT IS THE ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE ABILITY."


ELBERT HUBBARD

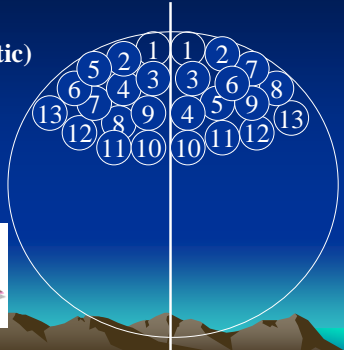
## HEMISPHERICITY

Left  
(Analytic)



Right  
(Global)






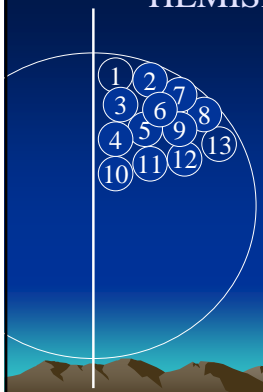
## HEMISPHERICITY

Left  
(Analytic)

1. Verbal
2. Responds to word meaning
3. Recalls facts, dates
4. Sequential
5. Processes information linearly
6. Responds to logical appeal
7. Trusts logical appeal
8. Looks tidy, organized
9. Plans ahead
10. Punctual
11. Reflective
12. Recalls people's names
13. Speaks with few gestures



## HEMISPHERICITY



Right  
(Global)

1. Visual, tactful, kinesthetic
2. Responds to word pitch, feeling
3. Recalls images, patterns
4. Random
5. Processes info in chunks
6. Responds to emotional appeal
7. Trusts intuition
8. Looks disorganized
9. Spontaneous
10. Less punctual
11. Impulsive
12. Recalls people's faces
13. Gestures when speaking

## Right Hemisphere: GLOBAL

- 1. Visual, tactful, kinesthetic
- 2. Responds to word pitch, feeling
- 3. Recalls images, patterns
- 4. Random
- 5. Processes info in chunks
- 6. Responds to emotional appeal

## Right Hemisphere

- 7. Trusts intuition
- 8. Looks disorganized
- 9. Spontaneous
- 10. Less punctual
- 11. Impulsive
- 12. Recalls people's faces
- 13. Gestures when speaking

## Characteristics...

- Creativity in artistic and musical expressions
- Leadership qualities, keen sense of justice, injustice, human understanding
- cognitions available to culturally different children are not measured on traditional tests.

Meeker  
found that Black children have strengths in...

- **SPONTANEOUS RECALL**
- **THE ABILITY TO DEAL WITH COMPLEX (3-4 STEPS) PROBLEM SOLVING IN DAILY ACTIVITIES**
- **AWARENESS OF DETAILS IN DESCRIPTION**
- **FLUENCY OF IDEAS**

## Meeker's Findings...

- **SPONTANEOUS CATEGORIZATIONS**
- **VISUAL SYNTHESIS IN COMPLEX DRAWINGS**
- **MULTIPLE MUSICAL PERCEPTIONS**
- **MULTIPLE KINESTHETIC PERCEPTIONS**

Torrance: CREATIVE POSITIVES OF BLACK CHILDREN:

CREATIVITY is a major strength of minority children.

- 1. Ability to express feelings, to improvise
- 2. Articulate in role playing
- 3. Possess artistic, musical, dramatic ability

## Torrance's Creative Positives

- 4. Expressive speech
- 5. Fluency and flexibility in non-verbal media
- 6. Skills in group learning and problem solving
- 7. Responsive to the concrete and kinesthetic

## Torrance's Creative Positives

- 8. Expressive body language
- 9. Originality in brain storming
- 10. Problem centered
- 11. Emotionally responsive

## Torrance's Creative Positives

- 12. Quick warm up (quick flow of ideas)
- 13. Sense of humor

## Overall...

- Qualities of social leadership
- outstanding qualities of human understandings
- Strong preference to respond to and with Gestalts

- strong preference for inferential reasoning;
- prefer to focus on people; has a keen sense of justice and injustice

## COMPARATIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF GIFTEDNESS

### CONCEPTS FROM THE LITERATURE

#### 1. Keen Observations

#### HOW MANIFESTED BY MINORITY GIFTED

Picks up more quickly on racist attitudes and practices; may feel alienated by school at an early age.

### CONCEPTS FROM THE LITERATURE

#### 2. Verbal proficiency, large vocabulary, facility of expression

#### HOW MANIFESTED BY MINORITY GIFTED

Large vocabularies not related to school; thinking in language of their culture may hinder the facility of expression in standard English.

### CONCEPTS FROM THE LITERATURE

#### 3. Questioning, curious, skeptical

#### HOW MANIFESTED BY MINORITY GIFTED

- Though some ask too many “wrong” questions some may have been conditioned to suppress questioning behavior.

### CONCEPTS FROM THE LITERATURE

- 4. Power of concentration; long attention span

#### HOW MANIFESTED BY MINORITY GIFTED

- Extremely strong concentration skills; may also express displeasure at having to stop an activity.

### CONCEPTS FROM THE LITERATURE

- 5. Diversity of interests and abilities

#### HOW MANIFESTED BY MINORITY GIFTED

- Has global intellectual ability; may neglect school work due to interests in artistic, musical, creative writing, psychomotor or leadership talents

### Suggestions/Solutions

- LISTEN ...

to responses that may at first appear to be off target. These children are divergent thinkers who get more out of a story or remark and have creative approaches to problems.

Hear them out and help them elaborate on their ideas.

### SOME SOLUTIONS

- Placing potentially gifted disadvantaged student in classes for the gifted without regard to the effects of poverty, racism, and class bias may become sink or swim situations.

Build in Safety Nets and Support Systems

### Solutions

- TRADE THE OBJECTIVITY OF STANDARDIZED TESTS FOR THE SENSITIVITY AND ADAPTABILITY OF HUMAN OBSERVATION AND JUDGEMENT-USE THE "HUMAN INSTRUMENT"

### Another Solution...

- LOOK FOR ANY SIGN OF ADVANCED PERFORMANCE THAT MIGHT REPRESENT UNTAPPED POTENTIAL.

## Another Solution...

- CHITTENDEN (1991)  
ARGUES THAT **DIRECT OBSERVATION**  
OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR IS  
“POTENTIALLY THE RICHEST SOURCE  
OF INFORMATION”

## NOTABLE MOMENTS CARDS (COMPLETED BY TEACHERS)

- CASE BY CASE REVIEW
- DISCUSSION
- ERRING ON THE SIDE OF INCLUSION
- STRIVE FOR EFFECTIVENESS INSTEAD OF  
EFFICIENCY
- AIM FOR A LARGE AND INCLUSIVE  
CANDIDATE POOL

## Look for Traits Like...

- CREATIVITY
- PERSERVERANCE
- PROBLEM SOLVING

## An Additional Thought:

- INSTEAD OF MEASURING WHAT A  
STUDENT KNOWS AND CAN DO AT  
THE TIME OF TESTING, GAUGE  
WHAT THE STUDENT IS READY TO DO  
OR COULD DO WITH A LITTLE  
INSTRUCTION.

## Solutions...

- EXPOSE THE STUDENTS TO  
MULTICULTURAL CURRICULUM-  
BASED ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES AND  
**OBSERVE** BEHAVIOR
- PORTFOLIOS
- **LET-ME-TELL-YOU-ABOUT-MY-CHILD**

## Interview the Child

- FOR INSIGHT INTO THE CHILD'S  
THINKING, ASPIRATIONS,  
PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTAL  
SUPPORT, METACOGNITIVE  
AWARENESS, SELF-DETERMINATION  
(MITHAUG,1991)

## TRANSITIONAL SERVICES: Project Step-Up

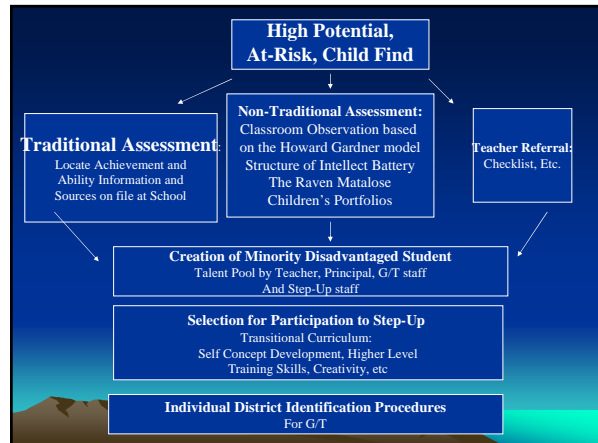
- **DIRECT INSTRUCTION OF THINKING SKILLS**
  - LANGUAGE ARTS AND ARTS FOCUS IN CURRICULUM
  - EMPHASIS ON CONTENT AND PROCESS

## Project Step-Up

- VISUAL REINFORCEMENT
- POSITIVE CLASSROOM CLIMATE
- USE OF POSITIVE LANGUAGE
- TEACHER FLEXIBILITY AND CREATIVITY
- PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

## Project Step-Up

- MENTORSHIPS WITH GIFTED ADOLESCENTS
- CREATION OF AN INDIVIDUAL TALENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN
  - PARENT SEMINARS
  - PARENT INTERVIEWS
- Resource: PEERS OF GIFTED STUDENTS



## Texas State Plan: Cultural Sensitivity Considerations

Assessment  
 Services/Options provided  
 Multiple assessment measures  
 Assessed in languages they understand or with non-verbal based tests

## Qualitative/Quantitative measures

Culturally diverse selection committee trained in nature needs of the culturally gifted

## State Plan Reminders:

- **Provide services in**
  - ✓ leadership
  - ✓ artistic areas
  - ✓ creativity

## State Plan Reminders:

- Procedures assure that
- all populations of the district
  - have access to
  - assessment
- and if identified, services offered

## Program Design

Content in the four core areas  
English, Math, Science, Social Studies,  
reflect principles  
of Multicultural education

## How to Inform the Parent of the Culturally Diverse/Dual Language Student

- Parents are informed of these options through:
  - \*churches
  - \*community recreation centers
  - \*local clubs and organizations
    - NAACP
    - NBPW club
  - Jack and Jill, Folklorico Dance Groups
  - African American sororities/fraternities

**Recognize ACT-SO**  
**Afro-Academic, Cultural,**  
**Technological, Scientific, Olympics**  
a nationally recognized program for  
African American high school students  
along with  
OM, DI, Invention Convention, STEM,  
FYI contact Joyce Miller, State ACT-SO  
Chair

## Curriculum

- Curriculum reflects principles of
  - **multicultural education**Learning experiences, products,  
performances that recognize the strengths  
of the **culture** are encouraged

## Professional Development

- \* **Culturally diverse** faculty and staff
- \* Teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the program for gifted students have **annual training** in nature/needs, assessment, and curriculum and instruction of the **culturally diverse gifted student**

**Administrators and counselors** who have authority for program decisions have annual **training** in nature/needs, assessment, curriculum and instruction of the **culturally diverse gifted student**

## **Family-Community Involvement**

A parent-community advisory committee reflects the **cultural diversity of the school population**

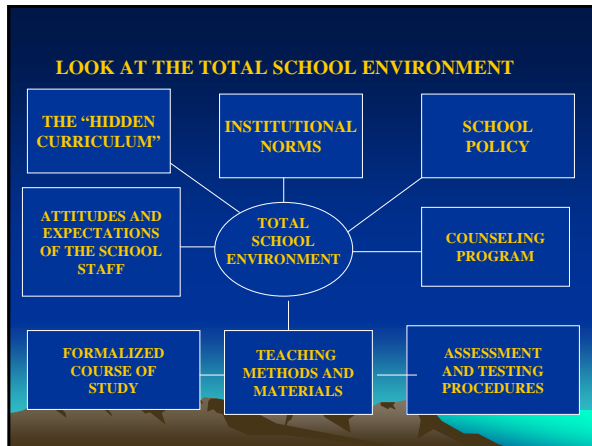
- **Culturally diverse group** of parents
  - and community representatives
    - are involved in
  - **annual evaluation of the gifted program**

## The Community

- **Community volunteers**
  - **mentors**
  - **community resources**
- **reflect the culture diversity**
- **of the school population**

## Personnel

Consideration given to the selection of **culturally diverse administrators, counselors, teachers, gifted students**



**Finally....**

- COMBINE THE OBJECTIVITY OF STANDARDIZED TESTS WITH THE SENSITIVITY AND ADAPTABILITY OF **HUMAN OBSERVATION AND JUDGEMENT-USE THE "HUMAN INSTRUMENT"**