

Placement Options for Gifted Children

(by O.S.)

Gifted children often find that a regular classroom learning structure and curriculum don't meet their needs. There are several kinds of approaches that can be used by teachers and parents to effectively maintain the desire to learn and motivate students to use their gifts and talents to the best of their abilities:

In-School Efforts re Continuous Progress

Individualized learning is provided and evaluated regularly and kept at a speed suited to the needs of the student. Work is usually well ahead of other students. Regular classroom teachers must be trained to do this. This may also require the support of a withdrawal gifted program so that contact may be established with intellectual peers as well.

Course Acceleration – skipping a subject completely or completing a course early by advancing the pace of the learning. This will require flexibility on the part of school staff.

Grade Acceleration – moving ahead to an-

other grade at a precise time in the education. This may be at the end of the school year or during natural breaks. Again, teacher flexibility is required. It is a hotly debated issue involving social and intellectual factors. One of the biggest concerns is that a whole year's course content may be missed. Considering all there is to learn, a missed year is often hardly noticed in the whole scheme of things. The important thing to evaluate is the child's skill levels.

Compacted Courses – subject(s) are reviewed and certain content removed to facilitate and accelerate the learning. The learning should be established with the child's input as well - not just the teacher's. Besides teachers, the students taking regular course material must be accepting of this arrangement and should also be allowed to compact courses occasionally if appropriate.

Concurrent or Dual Enrollment – Students may be enrolled in two or even more schools or other learning centre(s) and taking courses at different levels that meet their needs.

Early Entrance - students enter elementary, middle, high school, or even university/college before their peers. There are social issues to consider but how important are they if a child is provided learning at his/her understanding and skill level?

Special Examination – by experts or specialists who determine advancement or special consideration in light of superior ability, talent or skill.

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Amazing Websites

Gorilla Tape (the world's strongest and toughest tape! Holds bricks!) <http://www.gorillatape.com/home.htm>

Test: How Much Does Your Family Throw Out?
http://ecokids.ca/pub/fun_n_games/printables/activities/assets/envionmental/garbage.pdf

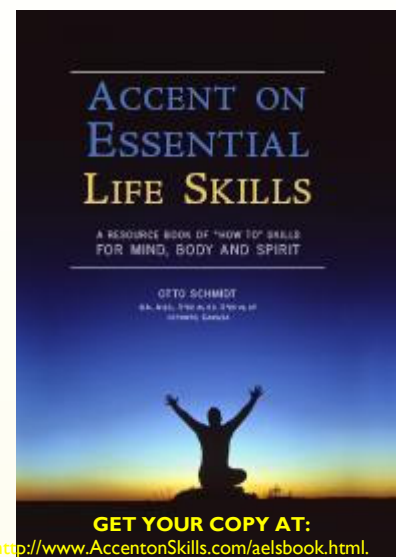
Architectoral Antiquities (salvaging and reselling the best from old buildings) <http://www.salvageweb.com>

Living Skeleton (tour of human bones)
<http://www.accessexcellence.org/RC/VL/xrays/>

Warning Label Maker (create your own signs)
<http://www.warninglabelgenerator.com>

Stick Figure Warning Man (everybody has seen this little guy. Lots of funny photos of signs in many places!)
<http://www.capnwacky.com/warning/>

Envelope Folding as Art Form <http://tinyurl.com/2mgbdg>
Origami Detective (story puzzle and problem-solving)
<http://origami.kvi.nl/misc/prop/index.htm>



News and Views

April 1 - Happy April Fools Day
April 3 - Passover
April 6 - Good Friday
April 6 - National Tartan Day
April 7 - World Health Day
April 8 - Easter Sunday
April 11 to 30 - Couple Appreciation Days
April 15 - Husband Appreciation Day
April 15 - That Sucks Day (feel for life's disasters)
April 15 - Leonardo Da Vinci Birthday
April 20 - International Noise Awareness Day
April 21 - Creativity Day
April 21 - Administrative Professionals Day
April 22 - Earth Day
April 23 - World Book and Copyright Day
April 26 - World Intellectual Property Day
April is Earthquake Preparedness Month.
The last week of April is the annual "TV-Turnoff Week" - no TV, video games, internet for the week
www.tvturnoff.org, National Poetry Month, Jazz Appreciation Month, Financial Literacy Month

Art Cars of the World

(from an article by Rupali Arora, Columbia News Service and reported in The Toronto Star)

There are people who know just how to get attention, and some really get it especially when they are driving their cars. They get eyes to turn by decorating their vehicles in outlandish but amazingly creative ways. One owner covered the entire surface with shiny pennies. Another designed a giant bra out of 250 bras carefully stuck on her vehicle. How about covering a car in hair curlers, or planting live growing grass over it? A hearse is covered with 600,000 buttons. "Spoon Man" riveted 1400+ spoons on his truck.

There are over 500 car artists in the US who decorate cars in more and more eye-catching and creative ways. Don't miss these sites. Truly amazing!

Art Cars Home Page <http://www.artcars.com/>

Art Car Fest <http://www.artcarfest.com/>

The Educators of the Gifted Organization (EdGO)

[FORMERLY Educators of the Gifted of Ontario -Teachers Association for the Gifted of Ontario (EDGOTAGO) Toronto, Canada]

We are affiliated with the Council for Exceptional Children, Canada

Our mandate: assist educators of gifted children in public, separate, private schools, & home schooling.

Register: Teachers in regular classrooms with gifted children, gifted program administrators/coordinators & facilitators, and home schooling parents are encouraged to register with us. Give us your details and full contact information: mail@edgo.ca

Communication: Use our website resources, subscribe to our "Gifted Voice" newsletter, attend our conferences. We can assist in many areas of gifted education. Share your ideas and concerns as we are also a member of a government special education advisory committee. Our new site is: www.edgo.ca

Research on Multitasking

(from an article in Metro Newspaper)

Talking on the phone while reading an email and listening to your ipod can impair your ability to get things done. Multitasking is becoming a serious problem as research shows reduced ability to do simple tasks. We are wired to do one task at a time and if we do two or more simultaneously, decisions take longer. Fast switching gives the illusion of doing several things at once. Solution: divide work into a series of small, simple tasks and do one at a time.

The Hidden Costs of Multitasking

<http://www.apa.org/releases/multitasking.html>

The Art of Multitasking (how to do it if this article really doesn't change your mind about it)

<http://www.fastcompany.com/online/63/multitasking.html>

Gardening Trends in 2007

(from an article by Stephen Weir in Toronto Star)

What's happening on lawns and in gardens this year? Be trendy and right "with it" as these are the trends:

- Pre-planted containers
- Doing it "my way" but in an eco-conscious way
- Backyard organic vegetable gardens
- Low maintenance lawns using white clover to replace grass
- Living walls of plants, waterfalls and fish in office buildings
- Cultivating plants on roofs, brick walls, fences and decks
- Water collecting from roofs
- Use of never-mow artificial grass
- Dramatic reduction of use of fertilizers and pesticides

Electronic Snack Attacks

(based on an interview on CBC Radio)

Many websites offer clips and short bits of news, entertainment and other glimpses into life. As we use these more and more, we become a clip culture.

In earlier days, vaudeville had a variety of acts to entertain people but each act took some time. However, today, at the click of a button, we can move from music to video to radio to articles at an ever increasing speed. We consume information and entertainment in bits and pieces in multiple formats e.g. going from email to news clip to online clip. We graze all day with sitcoms, music videos, and sound and visual bites.

The whole formatting process in the media is changing. Individual songs are replacing albums as people distill essence and move on. Viewers watch 2-3 TV channels at a time. Advertisers must be more careful to create more touch points as people and corporations control content.

What are some of the effects? People are getting shorter attention spans which must be catered to - studies show that at about 1.5 minutes there is an urge to switch. Time length of shots during TV programs are shortening.



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People have less depth of knowledge and less understanding of concepts. At the same time, there is a growth in the talent pool as demand for variety increases. New innovative approaches are being developed in radio, television and print media.

Radio SASS is a good example of a company that has taken this to heart: "Today radio does well to deliver 12 songs an hour. Radio SASS can zip out thirty or more."

Radio SASS (Short Attention Span System)
<http://www.radiosass.com/sasswhat.html>

We welcome creative contributions to this newsletter. Send us your articles or ideas, jokes, wise words, fun activities, letters, trivia. E-Mail to: GiftRap@DiscoverTeenergy.com

Morality: Innate or Learned Behavior? (from an article by Carey Goldberg, Toronto Star, as reported in the Boston Globe)

Is morality influenced by culture and teachings of society or are humans "hard wired" with it - like our instinct for language? Marc Hauser, a Harvard evolutionary biologist, believes that morality is innately based in our biology. He believes that there is a set of moral rules that is the same for all people - religious or not. His conclusions come from studies of decision-making in moral dilemma situations.

Arguments for Innate Morality:

- spanning ages and cultures is the idea that doing something bad is worse than letting something bad happen despite the same results e.g. watching and letting someone get beat up vs actually beating someone up
- Moral decisions can be influenced by shifting the focus e.g. sacrificing one person to save a group vs. sacrificing a large group to prevent total extinction of a few
- Animals and humans exhibit similar consideration and moral decision-making processes when confronted with behaviour that is intentional and accidental.

Arguments Against Innate Morality:

- negates idea of free will
- suggests predetermined choices in life

Arguments for Learned Morality:

- only some cultures condone honour killings
- the need to deal with varied societal complexities causes different decisions to be made

Hauser's Moral Dilemma Test (take the test online)
[Http://moral.wjh.harvard.edu/index2.html](http://moral.wjh.harvard.edu/index2.html)

Experimental Philosophy
<http://experimentalphilosophy.typepad.com/>

Collection of Moral Dilemmas (great debate and discussion generators)
<http://www.friesian.com/valley/dilemmas.htm>

Kohlberg's "Stages of Moral Development" Dilemmas
<http://www.haverford.edu/psych/ddavis/p109g/kohlberg.dilemmas.html>

Computer Top Tip

Start your computer when you first get up so that all the virus checking and other timed maintenance work is done or mostly done by the time you are ready to start work. All should then be up to top speed. There are some people who leave their computer on 24/7 and have the checking done in the very early hours of the day. This is valuable to know especially if you have a large number of files on the hard drive.

Do-It-Yourself Home Computer Maintenance Guide
<http://www.home-computer-maintenance.com/>

Tidbits of Trivia

- April, as a person's name, ranks about 278th about as popular as in the 1950's. In the 1970's it peaked at number 34.

- The name Easter is derived from Eastre or Eostre, the pagan Goddess of Spring. Her symbol was a rabbit.

- Bunnies are among the most fertile of animals so they symbolize abundance.

- Eggs represent fertility and are symbols of life.

- Easter eggs are painted to reflect the sunlight in spring.

- There are about 60 million

chocolate bunnies made in North America each Easter time.

- 74% of kids eat bunny ears first, about 13% eat feet first, 10% eat tails first.

- Pretzels were one of the first Easter treats. Twists represent folded hands in prayer.

- Easter baskets were first meant to be symbols of bird's nests.

- The 15 million jelly beans that get eaten each Easter, if lined up, would circle the globe three times.

- the average person uses about 343 litres of water each day.

Interesting Reading

Limits to Growth: The 30-Year Update by Donella H. Meadows, Jorgen Randers, Dennis L. Meadows. Describes a society hooked on unrestrained growth leading to collapse.

Silent Spring by Rachel Carson. One of the most important social writers of the 20th century, describes needs and roadblocks in protecting the environment.

Trash by John Knechtel. We are what we throw away. Various artistic types look at how we are defined by what we waste.

The 100 Best Trends, 2006: Emerging Developments You Can't Afford to Ignore By George Ochoa, Melinda Corey

"Accent on Essential Life Skills"

a resource book of 48 "how to" skills

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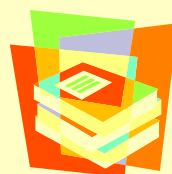
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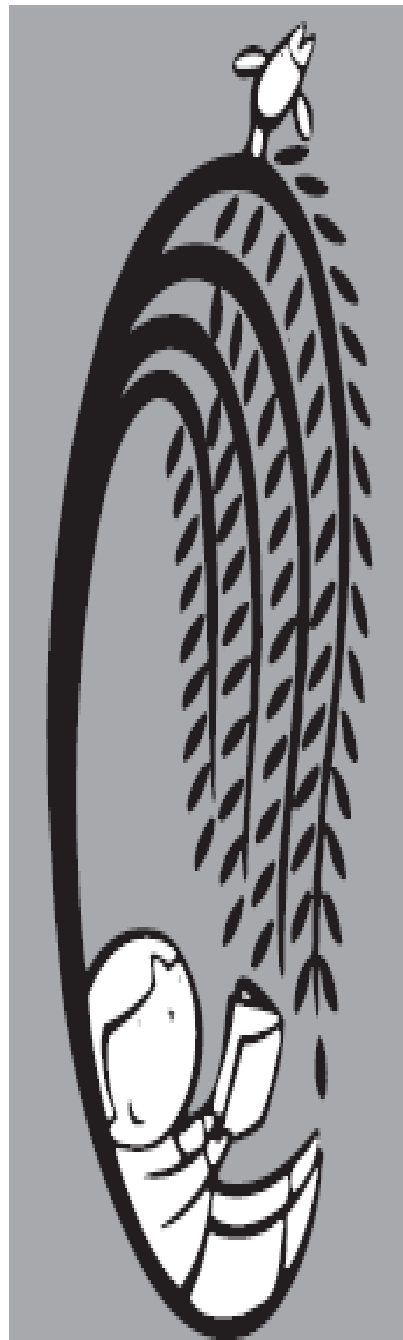
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Jokes of the Month

Animals may be our friends. But they won't pick you up at the airport. (Bobcat Goldthwait)

I knew these Siamese twins. They moved to England, so the other one could drive. (Steven Wright)

Two old ladies are in a restaurant. One complains, "You know, the food here is just terrible." The other shakes her head and adds, "And such small portions." (Woody Allen)

I feel sorry for people who don't drink or do drugs. Because someday they're going to be in a hospital bed, dying, and they won't know why. (Redd Foxx)

What Will They Invent Next?

Virtual Laser Keyboard. A small box sits on your desk and projects a bright light unto the top surface. A keyboard is outlined and the user can touch keys as required and the letters will appear on the computer screen. No more keyboard hardware or wiring. A flat surface is required.

<http://www.virtual-laser-keyboard.com/>

Parent College

Our mission is to educate parents to help them create a more nurturing and cohesive family unit and become better teachers, counselors, advisors and parents to their children.

Stephen Dubrofsky
speaker, teacher, instructor,
author, radio show host

<http://www.familyground.com>

416-557-6659

Stephen@familyground.com

YOUR ENRICHMENT HEADQUARTERS

- activities database, contact all schools, leadership, teens in crisis, activism, money, and more

"Teen Activism" - loaded with ideas for involvement

See it on the home page of:

<http://www.discoverteenergy.com>

Wise Words of Wisdom

He who asks a question is a fool for five minutes; he who does not ask a question remains a fool forever. Chinese Proverb

"Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life's coming attractions."
- Albert Einstein

"Whatever the mind of man can conceive, it can achieve."- H. Stue.

"Obviously everyone wants to be successful, but I want to be looked back on as being very innovative, very trusted and ethical and ultimately making a big difference in the world.- Sergey Brin, co-founder of Google search engine.

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