

## **PLANNING INSTRUCTION FOR GIFTED LEARNERS**

### **2.3**

The following considerations, related to the integrated curriculum as well as to the social and emotional support needs of gifted learners, are important in planning differentiation for gifted learners.

#### **Curriculum Based on DoDEA Content Standards**

Academic experiences should build upon the DoDEA curriculum content standards. In this way, students maintain close connections to general education instructional opportunities while being provided with challenges that ensure new learning for them every day. Close connections with the general education program also ensure that identified students will not experience gaps in their knowledge and skill development.

#### **Assessment**

Identified students should have appropriate and frequent opportunities to document their proficiency in essential curriculum concepts and skills. When they exhibit proficiency before instruction, these students should be provided with alternative learning experiences that extend their learning rather than repeat or review demonstrated knowledge or skills. Classroom assessments before instruction facilitate the process.

#### **Fast Pace**

Students identified for gifted education services should have opportunities for more rapid pace of instruction. These students usually do not require repetitious activities for deep understanding. Consequently, they are ready for faster movement through learning sequences. Compressed presentations of new learning allow time for other experiences to extend knowledge and skills rather than repetitions of the same content.

#### **In-Depth and Interdisciplinary Explorations**

Identified students should have regular opportunities for in-depth exploration of key ideas, concepts, issues, and themes related to units of study. Such explorations are often interdisciplinary in nature.

#### **Opportunities for Advanced and Broad-Based Reading**

The curriculum readability index for gifted learners should be at least one or two grade levels beyond the given designated level. Multiple in-depth readings in the given area of study should be available.

## **Problem-Based Learning**

Identified students need opportunities to develop and practice the skills of inquiry. A focus on problem-based learning asks identified students to take risks and consider multiple possibilities for problem solutions. Problem-based learning experiences should be grounded in strong content knowledge of the problem area.

## **Multiple Resources and Multiple Options**

Teachers should determine ways to strengthen student engagement in learning through the use of multiple options. Choices in resources, learning activities, and performance tasks that give evidence of learning allow students more control over their learning and foster independence. Many students identified for gifted education services are capable of designing their own learning tasks and demonstrating evidence of learning.

## **Unique Needs of Each Student**

Each student identified for gifted education services has particular characteristics, potential, needs, and accomplishments. Services should be matched as closely as possible to an individual student's profile of strengths and needs.

## **Opportunities for Independent Learning Based on Ability and Interest**

Students should be allowed to explore extensions of content-based curriculum, including independent investigations in various settings.

## **Support from Teachers**

A common myth about gifted students is that "they can make it on their own." Students identified for gifted education services need appropriate direct instruction and support from all teachers.

## **Experiences with Intellectual Peers**

Identified students need opportunities to work with intellectual peers some of the time. Flexible grouping arrangements within and outside the classroom can provide these opportunities.

## **Reasonable and Challenging Goals**

Students identified for gifted education services should experience opportunities that stretch their minds without overburdening them with more work. Different, more challenging, and complex work should be the expectation for identified students. Students should be helped to set realistic goals for their progress and then to reflect on their personal growth.

## **Social and Emotional Support**

Students identified for gifted education services often require adult support to deal with issues related to their unusual abilities and achievements. Professionals should be available to work with these students, helping them to cope with typical issues of stress, risk taking, peer relationships, goal setting, priorities, and planning for the future.