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Parents, Educators and Community Leaders Advocating Appropriate Instruction for All Gifted Learners in Virginia

Shakespeare For All Time: *Romeo and Juliet* by Sixth-Graders

by Betty Tabony, Gifted Coordinator, Nelson County Public Schools and Mary Coy, Shakespeare Consultant

Photos by Betty Tabony

*“For never was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.”*

– William Shakespeare,
Romeo and Juliet, 5.3

Partially funded by a Virginia Association for the Gifted Grant for Innovative Ideas, “Shakespeare For All Time” was a collaborative project among the two authors of this article and the three sixth-grade language arts teachers at Nelson Middle School: Doris Bibb, Holly Jones, and Mary Johnson. Our two main goals were 1) to involve all 170 NMS sixth-graders in a production of *Romeo & Juliet* in order to turn them on to the expressiveness of Shakespeare’s words and 2) to design and implement a six-weeks language arts unit that incorporated the sixth-grade English SOL while differentiating by interest, learning style, and readiness, in order to provide an appropriate challenge for all students, especially the 22 identified gifted students.

Betty’s decision to include the entire sixth grade and not just the gifted students came out of a desire for the gifted to excel in each child’s unique way while working within the larger group and without necessarily being “the best”. Working with gifted students brought out the strengths in many of the regular and special education students and led to an increased mutual respect among them and their gifted peers. Applying academic skills to practical use is a challenge for every student. Gifted, regular, and special education students, when challenged side-by-side in an equalized setting (putting on a play), found different ways to benefit from their own skills and those of each other.

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Keeping Shakespeare's original language, we edited the First Folio Romeo and Juliet into eight key scenes, which together created a shortened version of the whole play: 1) Introduction; 2) Party; 3) Balcony; 4) Marriage; 5) Tybalt's Death; 6) Romeo Is Banished; 7) Juliet's Potion; and 8) Monument. We assigned one scene to each class. Six weeks later at the Sixth-Grade Shakespeare Festival each language arts class performed their assigned scene twice for an audience of their teachers, parents, and peers. In order to help the audience keep track of multiple actors, the student Costume Masters made simple color-coded costumes; for example, the Capulets wore red and the Montagues wore blue.

The scenes were double cast and there were two performances: one set in Elizabethan times, the other in the present day. In this way we could cast twice as many students and were prepared for any absenteeism. Was Shakespeare truly "not of an age, but for all time" as Ben Jonson wrote of his fellow Elizabethan playwright? A post-performance survey given to a sampling of students reflected their feelings that Shakespeare's words are powerful no matter the chosen time period. ("Everyone should hear Shakespeare." "It can be reinvented to fit the time period." "Shakespeare's passion and emotion makes people still like his plays.")

In addition, staging the scenes twice in the two different time periods demanded research and creative thinking from the student Costume and Props Masters; for example, staging the fight scenes led to a discussion of how warfare has changed. Modern battles waged at a distance with weapons of mass destruction can't be staged dramatically like the hand-to-hand sword fights of Elizabethan times. The quiet student Props Master, much to the admiration of his peers, came up with the idea for switchblades and crafted them from wood for the Modern performance to contrast with the wooden swords used in the Elizabethan performance.

With the help of Shakespeare consultant and professional director, Mary Coy, the students took six weeks to prepare their scenes. The eight classes rehearsed their scenes separately during four weekly language arts classes, then held one dress rehearsal for all eight scenes in the auditorium, and finally performed the eight scenes twice (Elizabethan and Modern) at the Shakespeare Festival. Thus, the students practiced their ability to cooperate in the smaller groups in preparation for the large group setting.

We designed the project to incorporate sixth-grade English SOL via weekly lessons on the following topics: 1) Vocabulary; 2) Paraphrasing; 3) Metaphor; and 4) Prose vs. Poetry. In these

lessons, taught during rehearsal in a practical hands-on way, all students applied the same basic concepts and generalizations to Shakespeare's language, but each language arts class used the text and examples from their particular assigned scene. Differentiation of the content and process by interest, learning style, and readiness all came about through the variety of scenes and the demands of each role within the scene.

Differentiation of scenes and roles was accomplished by a combination of teacher assignment and student choice. Mary Coy first presented to the teachers an overview of the eight scenes and a list of characters for each scene with numbers of lines spoken and a list of backstage jobs (Prompter,

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Mary Coy coaches a fight scene in rehearsal.

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Aaron plays Romeo in the Balcony Scene.

Changing costumes back stage between scenes



Costumes and Props). One scene included music and a dance. Other scenes needed one or more strong actor(s) who could memorize a lot of lines. The teachers and Mary worked together to appropriately match the eight scenes to the eight classes, taking into account the varied class dynamics and student skills and abilities needed for each scene.

Student input into the process came at the end of the first of the four 90-minute weekly lesson/rehearsals that Mary Coy taught to each of the eight student groups. After complimenting each class on their scene assignment and summarizing the scene's importance in the scope of the whole play, Mary projected on the board a list of Shakespearean words taken from the scene and used the words in an SOL-based lesson on rhythm, rhyme, and how word choice affects meaning. Each student had a copy of the script for reference and began to grapple with the language of their scene in Elizabethan English. Finally, five minutes before the bell rang, Mary projected on the board the list of characters with the number of lines spoken by each and also the list of support jobs for producing the scene. She asked the students to quickly choose three roles/jobs they would accept for their class scene, one of which had to be an acting role. Students were guaranteed to get one of those three choices. Mary made it clear that boys could play girls, as was done in Shakespeare's day, and girls could play boys. They might choose to act in a major role, prefer being a walk-on character with no lines, or work backstage as the Assistant Director, Prompter, Costume Master, Props Master, Fight Choreographer, Program Designer, etc. They also could challenge themselves according to readiness. How many lines were they willing to memorize? By choosing a particular role they could follow their interests and also challenge themselves.

Each teacher met briefly with Mary immediately after the first lesson to assess the student choices and assign roles. The students learned their role assignments the following day. Amazingly it worked out that almost every student got his/her top choice. It was important to give a lot of weight to what a student chose for himself, even though the teachers were sometimes surprised by the choice. In a couple of scenes a gifted student had to be recruited to play a character with many lines that had not been chosen by anyone else in the class. Those students ended up being glad they got the more challenging role; for example, Aaron (*see photo top left*), a gifted student who had to be persuaded to play Romeo in the "Balcony" scene, wrote on his survey several months later, that he was surprised by "how good it turned out," that he most liked "performing," and that he didn't get any of his top three choices, "but I liked getting Romeo."

At each rehearsal, the students learned that the theater is a structured entity in which each of them had a role and to bring about success there were rules to go by, like saying "Prithee" when you forgot your line so the Prompter, who was following the script, could discretely rescue you, or using the rhythm of iambic pentameter to memorize lines.

At the dress rehearsal on stage in the auditorium (the week before the performances), each class performed their scene in chronological order for the other sixth-grade classes. Everyone saw that the play worked best when actors stood with their feet "cheating out" toward the audience and projected their voices. At this rehearsal each actor witnessed first hand all the hard work their fellow sixth-graders had done and the additional effort some would need to make in order to make the whole

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Swordfight between Tybalt (in red) and Mercutio (in purple). — — — — —

scene understandable. Each class worked with their teachers for another week. At the festival five days later – the culmination of all the hard work and cooperation, it was apparent who had been able to succeed in being heard and seen and, therefore, understood and who had not. The “assessment” was a live performance for a real audience.

We learned that the whole experience was more about process than product. The biggest criticism of the performances was that the audience couldn’t hear a lot of what was spoken. Since this was the sixth-graders’ first experience acting on stage, and they had to make do with limited rehearsals, we did not use microphones. Microphones (unless they are of extremely high quality and the speaker is experienced with using them) tend to disembody the actor’s voice, which would have undermined our emphasis on the expressiveness of the language. The student surveys showed admiration for the actors who really owned their roles, enunciated clearly, and projected their voices.

Most of the actors, even the ones who could not be heard well, delivered their lines from memory with no help from the Prompter. The photos and videos demonstrate the high engagement of the actors in the play. Class discussions to evaluate the project reflected the pride of the students in what they had accomplished together, as did the student surveys completed five months later. (“It was so good for so little practice.” “So many learned their lines.” “How good of actors people were.”)

One further accomplishment of our project was the inclusion in our Shakespeare Festival of eight on-your-feet workshops led by graduate students currently enrolled in the Mary Baldwin College MLitt/MFA Shakespeare in Performance Program. The workshop topics were: 1) Storytelling through improv 2) Renaissance dance; 3) Staging alternative versions of a R&J scene; 4) Rhetoric, rhythm, and rhyme; 5) Saying “Yes!” in improv; 6) Acting Shakespeare with characters/objectives; 7) Embedded stage directions; and 8) Acting the darkness. The sixth-graders each attended two workshops, and later shared their experiences back in class discussions.

Finally, we would like to address why we (the teachers) chose to embark on such an ambitious undertaking. From the outset of their formal school education, young students are introduced to

language in a less physically active and more visual and intellectual way.

The theatrically based methods of this Shakespeare project helped make students aware that language is connected not only to thoughts and ideas, but also to feelings; not just to the mind, but to the body. Shakespeare’s plays reflect this greater physical understanding and awareness of language and are an ideal vehicle for students’ learning about the varied uses of language.

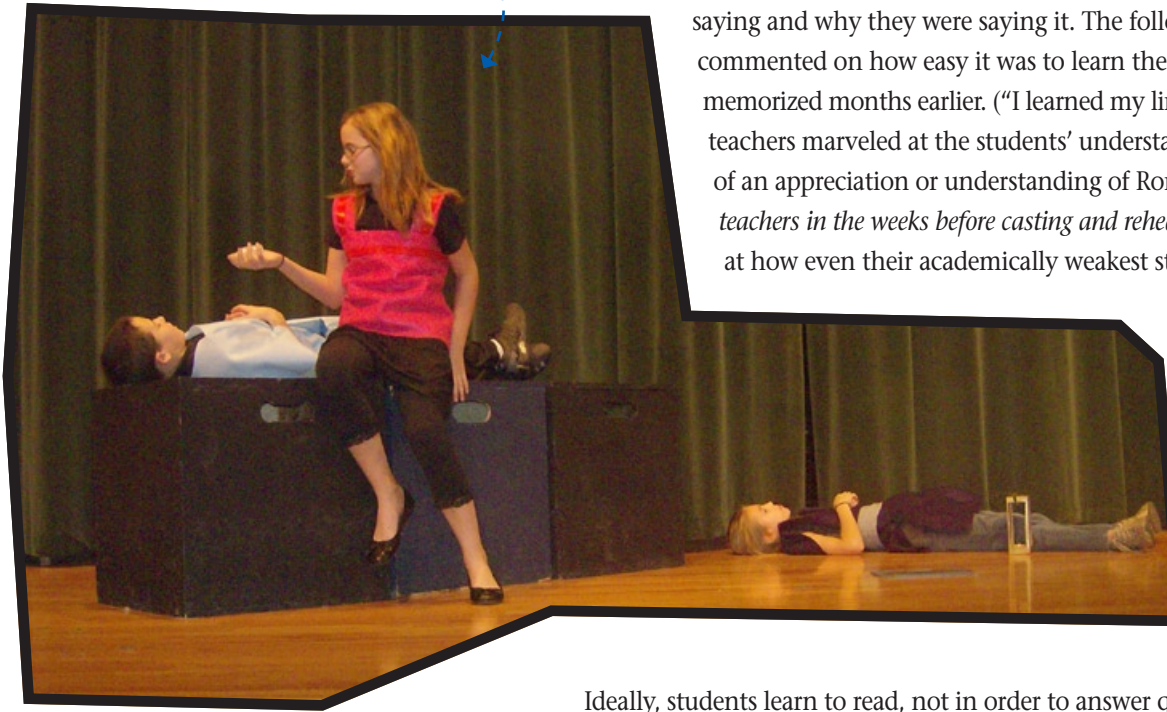
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Juliet takes the poison.



By casting a student as Romeo and having him memorize the following lines spoken to Juliet, “With love’s light wings did I o’erperch these walls,” or “I have night’s cloak to hide me from their eyes,” the student/actor can explore the actual feelings that inspire these words; and by miming jumping over a stone wall and playing under a balcony the student/actor through his body understands the need for secrecy and the ramifications of darkness. By staging the scene, the imagery becomes experience; and language is spoken out of that experience.

In discussions during and following rehearsals students over and over proved they understood what they were saying and why they were saying it. The follow-up student survey reflected that understanding. Students commented on how easy it was to learn the lines and were able to write from memory lines that they had memorized months earlier. (“I learned my lines but mostly I learned to get what they were saying.”) Classroom teachers marveled at the students’ understanding, remarking that as words read from a page sitting at desks, less of an appreciation or understanding of Romeo’s choice of words occurred. (*Students worked with classroom teachers in the weeks before casting and rehearsal reading a young people’s version of the play.*) Teachers were surprised at how even their academically weakest students took on the task of learning lines and creating performances.

Many of the Virginia English SOL are employed in order to create every theater performance. The Oral Language components of the SOL are needed at every rehearsal in order to make character choices and defend them to a director and when interacting with the other players in and out of character. In the post-project surveys several students remarked on how much they had to work together as a team. (“You have to work with other people to have a good performance.” “The most important thing I learned was teamwork.”)

The Shakespeare project also addressed the Reading SOL.

Ideally, students learn to read, not in order to answer questions from a test, but in order to understand character, content, and action, and to be able to communicate that understanding to others. The theater is an ideal place to assess this standard as communicating effectively is exactly what actors must do to an audience. The ability to “describe the images created by language” and “describe how word choice and imagery contribute to the meaning of a text,” and “explain how character and plot development are used in a selection to support a central conflict or storyline” is most useful and most interesting when actually telling a story and, as our students discovered, actors are ultimately storytellers.

This school year we plan to continue with our sixth-grade Shakespeare project. Our English SOL emphasis will be on paraphrasing, summarizing, and diagramming sentences while we also keep our focus on the “expressiveness” of Shakespeare’s language. We will do the comedy *As You Like It*. We hope to take the whole sixth grade on a field trip to hear the play performed by the American Shakespeare Center at the Blackfriars Playhouse in Staunton, Va., a re-creation of the indoor London theater that was used by Shakespeare for his plays. (For more information about our Shakespeare project, email: btabony@nelson.k12.va.us.)

Resources:

Tomlinson, Carol A. *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-ability Classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2001. Print.
“VDOE :: English Standards of Learning Resources.” VDOE :: Virginia Department of Education Home. Web. 25 Aug. 2010. <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/english/index.shtml>.

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From the Executive Director



This is our second on-line edition of the VAG Newsletter. We have changed our format slightly and would like to hear from you regarding on-line readability. In this issue you will find an article written by Dr. Carolyn Callahan about standardized tests and their myths and use in identifying underrepresented populations. Many thanks to Betty Tabony and Mary Coy for sharing their successful implementation of the unit, "Shakespeare for All Times," partially supported by a VAG Teacher Innovative Grant. We also thank Margaret Gilhooley for allowing us to include information about summer programs from her Arlington Newsletter.

We are using email as a means to get information to you quicker. Please help us keep our email addresses up-to-date. If your email address has changed or if you didn't receive an email from us about this newsletter posting, please email us your new email address. Your name and email address are all we need. We want to be able to let you know about opportunities and resources – email is the best way for us to do this. If in doubt, send an email to vagifted@comcast.net.

Don't forget to keep your VAG membership up-to-date. We will be sending out reminders about your expiration date. Don't wait; go online at www.vagifted.org and click on membership for an application. You may pay online with a credit card or mail a check to us at VAG, P.O. Box 26212, Richmond, VA 23260-6212. Your membership in VAG and support of gifted learners in Virginia has never been more important. Help maintain a viable voice about the needs of the gifted.

Your board members visited members of the General Assembly in February asking for support of educational excellence for all Virginia students including the gifted. Members of the VAG board will visit members of Congress in March to advocate on behalf of the gifted education community to increase federal support for gifted and talented learners.

Liz Nelson

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Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ E-mail _____

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President's Letter

With the new state regulations, there is much conversation about measuring and reporting the growth of gifted learners. Some look to out of level testing while others are comparing performance on state tests with comparable groups of students. As coordinator of a large district with strong support for gifted education I have found that accounting for the achievement and progress of a gifted learner requires an assessment system that is designed to accommodate high levels of performance. The criteria for student performance must exceed grade level standards and include in-depth knowledge, an advanced application of skills, and a deep understanding of the content, issues, and problems inherent in a field, subject area, or discipline. This type of assessment requires complex performances, real-world applications, and/or simulations that allow intellectual growth to be documented through student portfolios, oral presentations, projects, and oral/written exams tailored to evaluate the learning and achievement of a gifted learner.

High quality curriculum designed for gifted learners such as those developed by the Center for Gifted Education at the College of William and Mary, the National Research Center at the University of Connecticut, or those that have been created as examples of the Parallel Curriculum Model include excellent models of assessment that allow each student to work toward high levels of authentic achievement accompanied by professional standards of quality. Rather than seek a "one size fits all" assessment to measure the growth of gifted learners, I suggest implementing the assessments embedded in high quality curriculum designed for gifted learners and sharing and reporting the results of these assessments as a viable measure of their intellectual growth.

Please write an article and share what your district has found to be an effective measure for documenting the growth of gifted learners. Or consider submitting a proposal for our fall 2011 conference, The Many Faces of Gifted, in Williamsburg and share your own successful practices that align with the new state regulations so that others may learn from you.

Carol Horn



VAG Newsletter Dates and Deadlines

The VAG Newsletter is published online four times each year. Deadlines for items are February 15, May 15, August 15 and November 15. We invite you to submit your suggestions and/or articles you have written and would like to share with VAG members through this newsletter. Parents and teachers are especially encouraged to submit their children's original creative writing pieces. Email articles or photographs to vagifted@comcast.net or mail to VAG, P. O. Box 26212, Richmond, VA 23260-6212. Black and white or color prints can be used, but will not be returned to you.

Visit our web site – www.vagifted.org

Myths Perpetuated in the Name of Equity: It's Time to Put a Stop to False Assertions and Promises

by Carolyn M. Callahan, Ph.D., Commonwealth Professor, Department of Leadership, Foundations, and Policy, University of Virginia

At the risk of seeming politically incorrect, I feel it is time to address the issue of equity head-on with the clear goal of respecting all students and the goal of talent development and serving gifted students. For too long we have been victims of unsubstantiated myths that are repeatedly and blindly perpetuated in the name of equity, but based on charismatic speakers and appeals to emotions. The time has come to challenge those myths that will embarrass us among assessment experts and in the general education field. The time has come to be rational while committing ourselves to real change that really matters.

Please be assured that like nearly everyone in our field I am deeply and truly concerned about issues of equity and fully dedicated to providing access to high level learning to all students who have the potential to succeed in those experiences. But we need to approach the identification of these students and the development of appropriate service delivery models and curriculum based on sound psychometric principles, on “real information,” and guidelines that are defensible. To that end, let's explore some of the prevailing myths.

Myth 1: Standardized intelligence and achievement tests are unfair, biased, and therefore, should not be used in the identification of gifted students.

This statement represents one of the most egregious myths perpetuated in the field of gifted education. It has been extended by some to denigrate experts in the field who have done excellent work in suggesting ways in which standardized tests can be used fairly and validly in considering students from historically underserved groups. Further, it is simply an over-generalization that has been challenged by data over and over. Unequal performance on tests is NOT test bias. To claim a test is unfair and/or biased is to use those terms in the vernacular and without consideration of the carefully constructed meaning of those terms in the world of testing. Bias, in particular, is a term used in these myths as if it is a unitary term. However, there are two types of bias considered by testing experts—construct and predictor bias. They are inter-related, of course, but both should be considered before charges are levied that a test unfairly discriminates between genders or across minority groups. First consider predictive bias. Predictive bias reflects the degree to which a test does not accurately predict performance in the area in which students are expected to perform. In data collected on minority students for example, scores on tests of aptitude *generally over-predict* school performance. This suggests one of the problems with these myths. Until one can clearly define

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the expected performance and show definitively that the test does NOT predict that performance, charges of bias on this basis are totally unwarranted.

Further, every major test producer now takes multiple steps to ensure items with real or perceived bias are not included in published tests of intelligence or achievement. First, they assemble panels of experts made up of representatives of all groups that may be impacted by bias. Once any items that are determined to be biased on their face are eliminated, the tests are piloted on multiple groups and any items that discriminate by race but are not clearly related to the construct assessed are eliminated—again with the advice of the diverse panel.

Myth 2: The Office of Civil Rights has developed specific numeric criteria that are used to judge whether a gifted program is “in compliance.” The Office of Civil Rights advocates adding points to students’ test scores as a means of ensuring equity.

Subsidiary Myth: The proportions of minority or low-income gifted students in your gifted program should match the proportion of those students in your total school enrollment or OCR will find you in “non-compliance.”

A thorough review of OCR documents does not yield any such criteria that even suggest quantitative criteria for judging whether or not a school division has acted in accord with federal guidelines for ensuring equity. Here are some quotes which reflect the real OCR position. The first was developed in response to questions regarding representation of LEP students in gifted and talented programs.

“In determining whether a recipient has improperly excluded LEP students from its gifted/talented or other specialized programs, OCR will carefully examine the recipient’s explanation for the lack of participation by LEP students. OCR will also consider whether the recipient has conveyed these reasons to students and parents.

Educational justifications for excluding a particular LEP student from a specialized program should be comparable to those used in excluding a non-LEP peer and include: (1) that time for the program would unduly hinder his/her participation in an alternative language program; and (2) that the specialized program itself requires proficiency in English language skills for meaningful participation.

Unless the particular gifted/talented program or program component requires proficiency in English language skills for meaningful participation, the recipient must ensure that evaluation and testing procedures do not screen out LEP students because of their limited-English proficiency. To the extent feasible, tests used to place students in specialized programs should not be of a type that the student’s limited proficiency in English will prevent him/her from qualifying for a program for which they would otherwise be qualified.” – Policy Update on Schools’ Obligations Toward National Origin Minority Students With Limited-English Proficiency, United States Department of Education

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The second is from a memorandum issued relative to university admissions:

“OCR investigated a complaint alleging that a university discriminated on the basis of race and national origin by excluding students of certain ethnic groups from consideration for one of its scholarship programs. OCR confirmed that the university considered an individual’s race and national origin in determining the individual’s eligibility for a scholarship that the university established for students who are members of certain minority groups. **OCR determined that the university’s practice of awarding points towards eligibility for the scholarship based solely on a student’s race or national origin did not comply with the law.** To resolve the complaint, the university agreed not to award points to an individual based solely on race or national origin, and to fully consider an individual’s entire application for the scholarship.” <http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/ocr/annrpt2007-08/annrpt2007-08.pdf>

How can any responsible person suggest adding points to students’ scores in considering decisions on student placement when OCR has clearly ruled that such practice does not comply with the law?

Myth 3: Finding the “silver bullet test” is an adequate response to under-representation.

Many in the field blithely assume that if they can just find the right test that will give them higher scores so they can identify more minority students then they have done their part in addressing the under-representation issue. This myth is, in fact, more damaging and demeaning than any of the others. First, in many cases these well-intentioned individuals are selecting non-verbal assessments that not only result in the identification of more Caucasian than minority students, they are totally ignoring the fact that developers of these assessments have **not** provided any validity evidence for these instruments at all. In particular, the instruments have not been shown to be adequate measures of any construct related to school or life success. They are not predictive of school success, have not been shown to be predictive of success in gifted programs, nor predictive of success in any domain. Some claim that assessments of multiple intelligences will yield greater numbers of historically underserved populations and they grasp at rating scales and observations without regard to the data suggesting these instruments are not valid or even independent of verbal ability measures.

However, the determination to find “the instrument” begs the real issue which is our obligation to develop real talent. If we in gifted education really believed our goal was to develop the talent of our minority, low-income and second language learners we would be seeking ways to develop interventions for our young children in those populations that develop the knowledge, understandings and high level thinking skills that will prepare them for high end learning and performance in all classrooms—gifted and otherwise. If we can succeed at achieving that goal then all the other issues will fall by the wayside and we will have something we can really boast about!

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Have any of us stopped to wonder why, after more than 50 years of searching for “the instrument,” we have been so pitifully unsuccessful? It is because we are asking assessments to do the work we are unwilling to take on. Tests don’t create the problem. The roots of the problem lie in the lack of meaningful educational experiences and our wanton failure to be part of the efforts of the educational system to address the travesty of poor classroom

experiences for low income and minority students, to lend our expertise to the development of higher level engagement in content and process and product, and to work hand in hand with parents and classroom teachers to change the mindsets of children.

What can be done to address the myths? The first step is for each and every one of us to demand data, to demand evidence, and to avoid the pitfall of falling prey to the pleas to emotion over rational thinking. The second step is to ask the questions of ourselves and our peers about what we are doing that is based on sound verified evidence. Finally, we need to learn to challenge assertions, ask for evidence and be crucial consumers of the information that is blithely dished out by those who stand to benefit from perpetuating the myths.



Author Biography

Dr. Carolyn M. Callahan holds a Ph.D. in the area of Educational Psychology with an emphasis in gifted education from the University of Connecticut. At the University of Virginia she developed the graduate program in gifted education, the Summer and Saturday Program for gifted students. She has served as Director of the University of Virginia National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented for 18 years. Her research has resulted in publications across a broad range of topics including the areas of program evaluation, the development of performance assessments, and curricular and programming options for highly able students including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate. She has received recognition as Outstanding Faculty Member in the Commonwealth of Virginia, Outstanding Professor of the Curry School of Education, Distinguished Higher Education Alumnae of the University of Connecticut and was awarded the Distinguished Scholar Award and the Distinguished Service Award from the National Association for Gifted Children. She is a Past-President of The National Association for the Gifted.



Summer Programs for Gifted Learners

Many thanks to Margaret Gilhooley, Supervisor of Gifted Services, Arlington Public Schools, for allowing us to use excerpts from her winter newsletter listing of summer programs for gifted learners. In addition to the programs listed here, you can link to the Arlington Public Schools Gifted Services January Newsletter at <http://tinyurl.com/4uszu64> for the complete list of sites. You can investigate programs in the following areas:

- summer residential programs,
- study abroad,
- college summer programs for high school students,
- independent academic programs,
- arts-related programs,
- boarding school programs,
- outdoor adventures,
- programs for students of color and
- service learning opportunities.

Please be patient as you search for programs that may appear to be non-responsive.

While we do not imply any endorsement of the listings, we hope you will find them helpful and a good place to start your search for summer programs.



Programs in Virginia Organized by Age/Grade Level

College of William and Mary – Ages: 4 years-Grade 10 Summer Enrichment for Gifted Education

P.O. Box 8795

Stetson House, 232 Jamestown Road

Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795

Contact: 757-221-2458

Web: <http://www.cfge.wm.edu>, Click on For K-12 Students – Summer Enrichment.

Two one-week sessions – Non-residential programs

A wide variety of learning opportunities are available to gifted students from preschool to 10th grade educational levels. The courses emphasize the development of problem-solving skills and higher level thinking skills and are designed to supplement rather than supplant regular school curriculum. 95th percentile on a nationally normed standardized ability or achievement test in the course area and recommendation of a school official are required.

George Mason University – Ages: 5-18 Summer Camps and Programs for Youth

4400 University Drive

Fairfax, VA 22030

Web: www.gmu.edu Search Summer Enrichment or <http://summercamps.gmu.edu>

George Mason University is site to over 50-summer enrichment, athletic and residential programs offered on the Fairfax or Prince William campuses. Programs are available in the arts; creative writing; foreign language camps; sport camps; a fashion modeling camp; residential camps for camping at Hemlock Overlook Regional Park in Clifton, VA.

Academic camps include technology, robotics, finance, economics, mathematics, science, and debate. They also offer summer study for high school students where rising juniors and seniors can take freshman level courses at GMU for college credit.

iD Tech Computer Camp – Ages: 7-17

Located at over 35 universities nationwide including UVA, William and Mary, and Georgetown.

Contact: 888-709-8324 or 408-871-2227

Web: <http://www.internaldrive.com/index.php>

Week-long day and residential computer camps where students create digital movies, video games, websites, robots and more.

Wilderness Adventure at Eagle Landing – Ages: 8-17

P.O. Box 760

New Castle, VA 24127

Contact: 800-782-0779

Web: www.wilderness-adventure.com

Offers one- to four-week courses in camping/backpacking adventures in Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains located 4.5 hours from Tysons Corner. Rock climbing, rappelling, caving, canoeing, kayaking, mountain biking, climbing wall, high ropes and low ropes team building courses. Focus is on developing leadership, confidence, self-esteem and teamwork.

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Summer Programs

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Ferrum College Summer Enrichment Camp (FCSEC) – Grades 5-7

P.O. Box 1000

Ferrum College

Ferrum, VA 24088

Contact: 540-365-2121

Web: <http://www.ferrum.edu/fcsec/>

FCSEC combines academic enrichment classes with traditional summer camp. Course offerings: Archaeology, Web Page Design, Drama, Drawing, Photography, Science of Flight and more. Two one-week residential sessions are available.

Global Youth Village – Ages: 13-18

1020 Legacy Drive

Bedford, VA 24523

Contact: 540-297-5982/540-297-9081 registrar

Web: www.globalyouthvillage.org

An international and multicultural summer program in Virginia prepares youth and young adults for their role as global citizens. This three-week summer training program develops skills in leadership, dialogue, and global thinking.

University of Virginia – Grades: Rising 5-11 Summer Enrichment Program

P.O. Box 400264

405 Emmet Street, S.

Charlottesville, VA 22904-4264

Contact: 434-924-3182

Email: curry-sep@virginia.edu

Web: <http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/centers/enrich/>

Application due: February 15, 2011

The UVA Summer Enrichment Program is a two-week residential program for 5th-11th graders emphasizing development of research, critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills – varied content areas and innovative teaching approaches. This has a competitive application process and a limited number of students are accepted. Three two-week sessions.

University of Virginia Writers Workshop – Grades: Rising 9-12

Young Writers Workshop

P.O. Box 400273

Charlottesville, VA 22903

Contact: 434-924-0836

<http://web.virginia.edu/yww/>

Teenagers interested in writing work with professional authors in a workshop setting. The focus is on nurturing talented writers with an artistic vision. Application deadline is in early March.



Pre-Collegiate Summer Program in Early American History – Grades: Rising 11-12

College of William and Mary

PO Box 8795

Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795

Contact: (757) 221-7652

Web: www.wm.edu/niahd

Pre-college summer program in American History. This three-week summer academic course offers high school students four hours of college credit in a unique topic. Course is taught on site at numerous museums, archaeology sites and historic places in the Chesapeake region. The National Institute of American History and Democracy (NIAHD) is a partnership with the College of William and Mary and Colonial Williamsburg.

VCUarts Summer Intensive – Grades: Rising 11 and 12 Virginia Commonwealth University, School of the Arts

609 Bowe Street, 5th Floor

P.O Box 843047

Richmond, VA 23284-3047

Web: www.vcu.edu/arts/summerintensive

Contact: 866-534-3201

Rising juniors and seniors are invited to immerse themselves in intensive study of Dance, Theatre, Fashion Design and Merchandising, Filmmaking, Interactive Media, Animation, Interior Design, Video Production, Photography, Fine Arts: 2D and 3D Portfolio Building. Two-week workshops in July are taught by practicing artists in the various arts fields.

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Summer Programs

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Programs in Washington, D.C. Organized by Age/Grade Level

Constitution Academy – Grades: Rising 11-12

The Bill of Rights Institute
200 North Glebe Road, Suite 200
Arlington, VA 22203
Contact: 800-838-7870
Web: www.BillofRightsInstitute.org/Academy

Six weeks of distance learning culminates in a five-day residential program in Washington, D.C. packed with visits to local sites of historical and Constitutional significance and the challenge of college-level instruction. Thirty students are selected for each program week in deepening students' understanding of how the beliefs and ideas of the 18th century remain relevant in the 21st century. Scholarships are available.

Georgetown University – Grades: Rising 11-12

School of Continuing Studies
P.O. Box 571006
Washington, DC 20057
Contact: 202-687-8700
Web: <http://www12.georgetown.edu/scs/index.cfm>
Click on Summer Programs

Georgetown offers a variety of programs such as International Relations, Gateway to Business, American Politics & Public Affairs, and Journalism. Summer College allows students to earn up to 12 college credits across a variety of disciplines.

The Catholic University of America's Pre-College Programs – Grades: Rising 11-12

The Catholic University of America
Office of Summer Sessions
Pangborn Hall
Washington, DC 20064
Contact: 202-319-5257
Web: <http://summer.cua.edu>
Click on Pre-College Programs. <http://summer.cua.edu/precollege/>

Summer college students become immersed in college life and get a head start on their college career. Students choose from freshman-level courses, and earn college credit. Some specialized summer programs include architecture, forensic anthropology, opera, and percussion.

The George Washington University Summer Scholars Pre-College Program – Grades: Rising 10-12

The George Washington University
Summer Scholars Pre-College Program
2100 Foxhall Road
Washington, DC 2007
Contact: (202) 242-6802
Web: <http://www.gwu.edu/summer/scholars/>

There are 10-day mini-courses available for rising 10th-12th grade students. A six-week pre-college residential program for rising seniors offers college course credit, a writing program, enrichment seminars, and field trips around D.C.

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Summer Programs

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Programs in Maryland Organized by Age/Grade Level

University of Maryland Young Scholars Program – Grades: 10 and 11

University of Maryland
Office of Continuing and Extended Education
2103 Reckord Armory
College Park, MD 20742
Contact: (301) 314-8240
Web: www.summer.umd.edu

Developed specifically for highly motivated, successful rising juniors and seniors, the three-week program allows students to test their academic interests, learn about campus life, and get a jump on their college career.

The Arts! at Maryland – Grades: 11-12

University of Maryland
Office of Continuing and Extended Education
2103 Reckord Armory
College Park, MD 20742
Contact: 301-314-8240
Web: www.summer.umd.edu

A performing, visual and communication arts program designed for motivated, passionate, highly qualified dancers, musicians, actors, writers and visual artists.

Johns Hopkins Pre-college Programs – Grades: 10-12

Johns Hopkins University Summer Programs
3400 N. Charles Street
Suite G4 / Wyman Park Building
Baltimore, MD 21218
Contact: (800) 548-0548

Web: www.jhu.edu Click on Academics
Click on Summer Programs.

Click on Summer Programs in the School of Arts & Science & Engineering. http://webapps.jhu.edu/jhuniverse/academics/summer_programs/index.cfm

Explore your options at the John Hopkins University Summer Pre-college Program. Experience the perfect opportunity to sample courses before selecting a major or career path. Choose from over 80 classes that fit your personal interests and goals. Focus on your future, earn college credit, and have fun.

CTY Program through Johns Hopkins

Web: <http://cty.jhu.edu/> Click on CTY.
http://webapps.jhu.edu/jhuniverse/academics/summer_programs/index.cfm

CTY Summer Programs offer eligible students from all over the country the opportunity to engage in challenging academic work in the company of peers who share their exceptional abilities and love of learning.



News from the Virginia Department of Education

by Donna L. Poland, Ph.D.

Specialist, Governor's Schools & Gifted Education

Several new documents are available on-line at the VDOE Web site. I've provided the links and brief description of some of the documents below (all these documents are found on the gifted education Webpage under "Resources"):

Understanding the Virginia Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students (PDF)

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/gifted_ed/ed_services_plans/understanding_the_regs.pdf

This document is designed to be an explanatory guide to the Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students (<http://leg1.state.va.us/000/reg/TOC08020.HTM#C0040>). It is created for parents, educators, and citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Local School Boards: Roles and Responsibilities in Gifted Programs (PDF)

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/gifted_ed/ed_services_plans/local_school_boards.pdf

Roles and Responsibilities of Local Gifted Education Advisory Committees (PDF)

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/gifted_ed/ed_services_plans/local_gifted_advisory_committees.pdf

Supporting the Identification and Achievement of Twice-Exceptional Students (PDF)

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/gifted_ed/twice_exceptional.pdf

This document provides answers to frequently asked questions about identification and support of students with dual exceptionalities. Through a question and answer format, the document provides an overview of twice-exceptional learners, describes some learning and behavioral characteristics, suggests evaluation methods/procedures, and discusses placement and service options. Links to resources and websites are included.



14th Virginia Conference on Gifted Education

October 20-22, 2011

Williamsburg Marriott • Williamsburg, Virginia

Sponsored by the Virginia Association for the Gifted

For program and registration details visit ... www.vagifted.org