

GIFTED MATTERS NEWSLETTER

Issue #1, 2011



If you would prefer NOT to receive this newsletter in the future, please let me know via return email or to justelaine@xtra.co.nz and your name will be removed from the contacts list.

Copies can be downloaded from my website if preferred.

www.giftededucationservices.co.nz

Elaine Le Sueur

INDEX

NEWS UPDATE

SUPPORT GROUPS:

- Local
- national

RESOURCES

ARTICLES

- Identification

USEFUL WEB LINKS

- science related

SECONDLIFE

NEWS

Welcome to the first of what is intended to be a twice per school term communication to update primary and intermediate schools and teachers in the Auckland area in matters relating to gifted and talented education in the local area. The title is a deliberate play on words. It has arisen from the premise that in order to build successful relationships to meet the learning needs of our able/ gifted/ talented students, we need to encourage links between schools, parents and the community.

If you would like information included in the newsletter, please send to justelaine@xtra.co.nz

If you have received this newsletter from a colleague and would like to have one of your own in future, please email me with your request to be added to the mailing list

LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS/ CONSULTANTS

The following people were table conversation facilitators at the recent Cognition South Auckland Symposium.

NAME	TOPIC
Micheal King Cognition education project manager MKing@cognition.org.nz	Maori Perspectives
Elaine Le Sueur Consultant, Gifted Education Services Conversation co-ordinator elaine@giftededucationservices.co.nz	Cultural Diversity Identification
Angela Smith Principal, Mauku School principal@mauku.school.nz	Characteristics of gifted teachers

NATIONAL SUPPORT GROUPS

Barbara Dysart DP Summerlands School barbd@summerland.school.nz	Community values
Ruth Crawford Educational Psychologist rcrawford@xtra.co.nz	2E students
Sonia White Consultant / Gifted & talented Sonia@giftedconsultant.ac.nz	School systems
Vicki Cooper National librarian, NZAGC library@giftedchildren.org.nz	Home links
Julie Fox RTLB, Pukekohe Based at Pukekohe North School	Identification
Alison Kirby Educational Psychologist dartr@kiwilink.co.nz	Assessment
Tracy Schumacher DP, Mangatawhiri School	Classroom environment
Sue Breen smallpoppies@giftededucation.org.nz	Early years transition

MISSION HEIGHTS JUNIOR COLLEGE

Joan Middlemiss, Principal of Mission Heights Junior College spoke about D.E.E.P. and G.R.E.A.T learning : Meeting the personalised needs of the able within a 21st Century School curriculum. She offered the opportunity for visitors wanting to find out more about the programme to be hosted by her school on Tuesdays. Contact the school directly to make arrangements.

GIFTED SEMINARS ON WHEELS

Formerly University on Wheels, the Gifted Seminars are under the auspices of the Holiday Seminars Trust, which is a not-for-profit organisation that brings high quality opportunities for gifted students directly to the school.

Expressions of interest from schools are currently being taken for 2012. www.giftedseminars.org Pilot schools in 2011 include Puni, Summerlands and Upper Harbour.

Contact them to hear about the seminars from the school's perspective if you want an unbiased opinion !

2012 courses include :

- Shipwrecked
- Justice under scrutiny
- Dynamic Detection
- Futures Thinking
- Debating the Issues
- Human Calculators
- Toy Mania
- I am an artist
- Plato's Cave

- Reach for the Stars
- Keeping your wits about you
- Mathematical manipulations
- Maths with the Ancients
- Word Wizardry
- Eyewitness History
- An assembly of Caesars
- Musical Composition

TKI – TE KETE IPURANGI – Gifted and talented community. This is a source of what’s going on in gifted education in NZ.

www.tki.org.nz

You can join the forum to interact and/or receive a weekly update maintained by Kate Neiderer to keep you informed.

[Gifted and Talented Resource Exchange](#).

The following is a selection of the resources posted over the last few weeks in the Gifted & Talented Resource exchange (courtesy of Kate).

[Identification resources...](#)

Checklist of all the things you should consider when identifying GAT students (Anne Sturgess)

Checklist for developing identification procedures (Anne Sturgess)

[Science resources](#)

Water – a precious resource. Investigation into water for primary students (Elaine Le Sueur)

Investigating seeds. A series of questions to spark investigations on plants. (Elaine Le Sueur)

[Whole school policy](#)

GAT school register – example developed by Tuatahi

Creating your gifted register – critical questions to ask when developing a GAT register (Rosemary Cathcart)

giftEDnz

giftEDnz is a national professional association for teachers, principals, counsellors, RTLBs, educational psychologists, teacher educators, professional development providers, researchers, postgraduate students and anyone with a professional interest in gifted and talented education.

[Call for papers closes soon](#) – a reminder from Louise Tapper that the call for papers for the 2012 giftednz conference

“Giftedness Unfurled: Fostering Best Practice in Aotearoa New Zealand” closes November 21st. The conference will be in Wellington in March 2012. Organisers are keen to get classroom teachers presenting and sharing their work, along with researchers and other professionals

NZAGC

New Zealand Association for gifted children.

www.giftedchildren.org.nz President is Rose Blackett.

NZAGC One Day Conference and NZAGC AGM

Saturday March 17th 2012, Rangitoto College, Auckland.
"Gifted Teens, their Social and Emotional Needs".

Auckland branch representative is Annette Collins

auckland@giftedchildren.org.nz

Auckland branch is known as Explorers.

For children aged 6 and under the Auckland branch has a Young explorer's group. Contact Jessica Parsons

Jessica.parsons@gmail.com

South Auckland Branch representative is Trish Jarvis

southauckland@giftedchildren.org.nz

South Auckland branch is known as Discoverers.

South Auckland Discoverers run club days and activities for children and their families on weekends during term time and during some school holidays.

SMALL POPPIES

Small Poppies is a teacher-assisted group for gifted/talented students in the Auckland area. It is administered and operated by the Gifted Education Centre. Email smallpoppies@giftededucation.org.nz to request an information pack.

ONE DAY SCHOOL & GO (gifted online) PROGRAMME

www.giftededucation.org.nz

head.office@giftededucation.org.nz

FUTURE-IN-TECH

Futureintech is a Government-funded initiative of the Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand, the professional body for engineering. The facilitators listed below will support schools with industry ambassadors to assist with student projects relating to engineering. A wonderful resources that is somewhat under-utilised and it's FREE ! Visit the website for reports on what has been accomplished by students as a result. Amazing !

<http://www.futureintech.org.nz/initiatives-facilitators.cfm>



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Resources

DID YOU KNOW ...



The 20th World Conference on Gifted and Talented Children : THE SOUL OF

GIFTEDNESS will be held in Auckland, New Zealand 5 - 9 August 2013 . What an opportunity! Start preparing now.

TEACHER'S BOOK RESOURCES

Elaine's publications are available from www.thinkshop.org

Tools for Talent Bks 1 & 2

Classroom strategies to suit gifted learners, adaptable to a range of contexts.

Provocative Questions

Sample activities to promote deep learning based on philosophical themes.

Big Contexts for Inquiry Learning

Eight contexts based on an inquiry learning model with a sample guided process.

Read & Think series

Reading units for upper primary level including activity sheets to suit three levels of student ability

Using Sophisticated Picture books

Higher order thinking units for gifted readers based on readily available sophisticated picture books.

H.O.T. UNITS : Higher Order thinking Units

Book 1 : Years 1-4

Book 2 Years 5-8

Book 3 Years 8-10

ARTICLE

www.goodteacher.co.nz

16 Good Teacher Magazine Term 4 2011

FROM SNAPSHOT TO PHOTO COLLAGE

Elaine Le Sueur

This article focuses on talent spotting the behaviours that have been noted by researchers and educationalists from both a positive and negative perspective and that may indicate potential and the need to provide differentiated opportunities for the learner and creating a workable profile. Behaviours in isolation don't tell us much, but in clusters they are indicators of a need for appropriate programming. The aim is to build up a mosaic or collage of a student from a number of individual elements. (Each element is a reflection of a behaviour that may indicate potential.) Teachers who help students recognise and understand their developing talent will have an impact on the student's motivation to set realistic personal goals and pursue their dreams. They will also be remembered long after their influence has ceased to be direct!

In today's world of computer graphics, creating a profile is analogous to taking digital snapshots over time and then arranging them into a photo mosaic. One photographic session would not provide enough evidence of change or progress to enable the artist to complete the picture. Collecting the snapshots is only the first step. Once there is a folder full of images, the mosaic artist needs to decide how the snapshots will be put together. The individual pieces of a mosaic are arranged and the artist's perspective is shared with the world. Trial and error is an essential ingredient in the design process and this decision making relates equally to the classroom. Good teachers recognise that they won't always get it right, but are prepared to adapt their practice to create a better 'fit' for their students. Collaboration might be useful. New information might require different opportunities to be provided. Current information may be incomplete and point to a need for further observations or data gathering, but that shouldn't be used as an excuse for procrastination. Each piece contributes to the whole but retains its own identity or attributes. The picture that is created is a reflection of the pieces that are available at the time. Checklists are only useful if they reflect current best practice in a field and are regularly reviewed and updated, just as photographs are frozen moments in time that may not be an accurate depiction of the here and now.

➤ **How long ago was your school identification procedure reviewed ?**

Talent spotting is most effective when it is grounded in a real world setting.

In the spirit of the current climate for rugby world cup comment, the following are some insights into the relationship between the process of top team selection and the school classroom from my educator/ dedicated rugby couch potato's point of view ...

1. Rugby selectors know rugby, are able to determine the benchmarks for excellence in the field and have an understanding of the people that are involved in it, just as educators need to know the school community and the curriculum and have the experience to be able to effectively use a range of teaching techniques to meet the different learning needs of their students.
➤ **Time and support invested in this area is a priority in schools where the needs of able students are well catered for.**
2. Rugby selectors have an extensive knowledge of the rugby and support players who learn quickly, are able to adapt and take advantage of new situations. Effective teachers of gifted/ talented students use information to diagnose and develop differentiated action plans that meet the needs of students who learn faster than their peers, and demonstrate a deeper understanding by creating new links between concepts.
➤ **The dissemination of up-to-date research best practice benefits all participants. www.tki.org is the website link for teachers wanting to know more about meeting the needs of gifted and talented students in New Zealand.**

3. Rugby selectors use multiple sources of data including observation, talking to the players themselves about their aspirations and goals, player statistics, media reports, recommendations from coaches , order to inform their decision making. Prospective team members are given opportunities to showcase their abilities on a regular basis. By providing a wide range of differentiated opportunities for students in the classroom there may be some unexpected surprises as talents are seen to be valued and nurtured.
 - **A wide range of challenges for students to demonstrate what they are capable of doing is a priority in classrooms where the needs of able students are well catered for.**

4. Rugby selectors and educators both have to be able to make and justify the informed choices between potential and performance that are based on the resources available, but the window of opportunity is reduced for the rugby player because the season ends. Teachers, however, deal with students in their classrooms all year round. Behavioural checklists provide useful clusters of behaviours to look for, but in themselves are not enough. Just as it would be unrealistic for out rugby selectors not to take into account a range of other variables such as age, experience, and position in thinking about potential team members, it is important to have a multidimensional approach to identification of student talent.
 - **Ongoing, sustained and dated data gathering is a contributing factor in schools where talented students are identified and the diagnosis is supported by planning for differentiated action.**

Examples of behavioural check lists :

Bevan-Brown, J (2009) Identifying and providing for gifted and talented Maori Students
 APEX 15 (4), 6-20.
 Can be retrieved online at <http://www.giftedchildren.org.nz>

Harrison, C (2003) Giftedness in early childhood GERRIC, Univ. NSW

Kannevsky, L Brilliant Behaviours Checklist
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/gifted>

Successful talent spotting relies on having an understanding of the basic competencies and the progressions that are required to be able to develop an action plan that results in development of accomplishment further down the track.

SCIENCE WEBSITES OF INTEREST.

<http://www.adifferentplace.org/index.html>

An interesting site for able students to explore. All of the activities are technology integrated.

<http://www.exsmo.com/ESHSLibrary/Show-Me%20Webquests.htm>

A collection of 'Show me Science' Web quests. There is also help for students wanting to construct their own web quests.

<http://www.learner.org/interactives/parkphysics/>

How do physics laws affect amusement park ride design? Design your own roller coaster to find out. Plan it carefully--it has to pass a safety

inspection.

<http://www.tryengineering.org/>

Find out more about the lifestyles and experiences of professional engineers. They are the people who solve problems and focus on making things work more efficiently and effectively.

<http://www.rubegoldberg.com/>

Wacky cartoons which depict the most elaborate and ridiculous devices to accomplish the most mundane tasks.

GLOBAL VIRTUAL MEETING FOR GIFTED EDUCATION IN SECONDLIFE!

The Bavarian Center for Gifted and Talented Children is holding a "Global Virtual Meeting for Gifted Education in Second Life", November 19th 2011 at 9 p.m. CEST. Invited speakers are Truus van der Kaaj and Frank de Mink (Netherland)

Topic: 'Understanding giftedness according to Dabrowski: no G&T without personality development'

Truus van der Kaaj started as an English teacher, is qualified as Special Education Teacher and Specialist in Gifted Education (ECHA). She has extensive experience in SEN. She initiated and co-authored Thinking about Thinking (TaT): enrichment materials for secondary schools based on psychology, philosophy, creative thinking, meta-cognition, and spirituality (age 10 to 15 yrs). She is a teacher trainer, conducts parent courses, counsels G&T, and introduced Dabrowski by courses for experts in The Netherlands. She initiated Dabrowski Europe, a group of universities and practitioners with focus on Dabrowski and research and applications of TPD in counseling and education. She initiated the association How to Philosophize.

Frank de Mink started as a physics teacher and teacher trainer. He continued in educational psychology and worked 25 years as a trainer, staff developer and consultant in Higher Education. His interests are in creative thinking and moral development. In 1995 he began working in gifted education and introduced SENG-parent-courses in The Netherlands. From 2003 he started working as a co-author on Thinking about Thinking. From 2006 he works with Truus on Dabrowski Europe and courses about gifted and talented for teachers, experts and adults.

For full details about how to attend this session see

<http://www.begabungszentrum-bayern.de/global-virtual-meeting-for-gifted-education-in-secondlife/>

END

