

GIFTED MATTERS NEWSLETTER

Issue #2, November 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 viewed on my website if preferred.

www.giftededucationservices.co.nz

Elaine Le Sueur

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NEWS UPDATE

LOCAL SUPPORT

NATIONAL SUPPORT

RESOURCES

ARTICLE:

- The Shape of Gifted Education

USEFUL WEB LINKS

Welcome to the second 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.

NEWS

The handbook, 'Gifted and talented Students : Meeting their needs in New Zealand schools,' has been re-designed and revised to support effective school self review/ identification and curriculum provision for gifted and talented students.

It will be available as a PDF on www.gifted.tki.org.nz in March, 2012.

If you missed the documentary about Ngaa Ruuira Pumanawawhiti, the 17 year old who is now at Yale, ('Maori Boy Genius') it will be screened again on Sunday, 27 November at 6pm. (thanks to Sue Barriball for this information)

Click on this link to read about him on this blog by the producer's sister...

<http://aboutlastweek.blogspot.com/2011/11/maori-boy-genius.html>

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

LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS/ CONSULTANTS

Additions to the initial newsletter list ...

THE GIFTED KIDS PROGRAMME

This programme is active in Mt Roskill, Tamaki, Otara and Mangere.

www.giftedkids.co.nz

For further information contact Deb Clark ceo@giftedkids.co.nz

INSPIRED LEARNING DIRECTIONS

Do you know of a bright child with reading difficulties, or who suffers from migraines? Testing for Irlen syndrome may help.

www.inspireducation.co.nz (Robyn Harawira/ Mobile Learning consultancy). Some dyslexic children and adults find it hard to read a page of writing due to the '**glare**' of the **white page**. Others find that the words appear to move around or become fuzzy: Reading through a **colored transparent filter** - such as tinted spectacles or a transparent plastic sheet specially designed for this purpose - often helps. Different colors suit different people, and Robyn Harawira is a certified Irlen specialist who can make a thorough assessment and prescribe suitable lenses.

For a rough idea of the difference that colour can make go to

<http://www.dyslexia-test.com/color.html>

PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN (P4C) PROGRAMME

A central concept of philosophy for children is that of the 'community of inquiry', which may be defined as a reflective approach to classroom discussion built up over time with a single group of learners. The 'community' embodies co-operation, care, respect and safety; and the 'inquiry' reaches for understanding, meaning, truth and values supported by reasons. As a community of inquiry develops over time, the children's questions get deeper and more thoughtful. Their discussions are disciplined and focused, yet, at the same time imaginative. They care about what others say but don't accept easy answers. A community of inquiry combines critical, creative, caring and collaborative thinking.

BASIC TRAINING IN AUCKLAND ...

FRIDAY 16th , Saturday 17th March 2012 COST : \$240pp. VENUE :

Balmoral School. Registrations by 7th March, 2012

CONTACT : Trish Ramsey TrishR@balmoral.school.nz

Co-ordinator and Principal Trainer P4CNZ

Dr Vanya Kovach

University of Auckland

v.kovach@auckland.ac.nz

ELAINE'S RECOMMENDATION : A wonderful book to use in the classroom for talking about philosophical issues is 'An ABC of Philosophy' by Tiffany Poirier. Published by O Books (UK) in 2009.

GIFTED STUDENT NEEDS ANALYSIS

Ideal for the 'kid who can' in your classroom.

There are 4 ways in which learning can be modified to meet the needs of all students. **What** is learned, **how** it is learned, **where** the learning takes place and the expected product or **result**. What makes the difference is **student voice**. The Student Needs Analysis Questionnaire is designed to be completed by an individual able student then analysed to give the teacher guidance in meeting learning needs that can be incorporated into the daily classroom. For a copy of the questionnaire contact justelaine@xtra.co.nz . Follow up analysis costs \$50 + GST per student and includes 4-6 pages of suggestions that can be implemented in the regular classroom. Used in a wide range of schools including Peninsula Primary school in 2012.

EXPLORERS UNLIMITED

(Auckland branch of NZAGC) holds club days approximately every second Saturday afternoon from 2pm-5pm. Twice a year (summer camp in the 1st term, Winter camp in Term 3) there are residential family weekends. The annual fee is \$75 per family and is due on joining. Of this \$25 goes to the branch to pay for administration, newsletters, postage, books, games etc. \$50 goes to the National Council of NZAGC.

Dual membership if you live in the South of Auckland there is a South Auckland branch called Discoverers, that meets on Sundays in Pukekohe. If you join both then it is an extra \$14 annually for existing members of NZAGC. Contact Trish Jarvis trish.mike@xtra.co.nz or southauckland@giftedchildre.org.nz

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.

<http://gifted.tki.org.nz/interact>

CERTIFICATE OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE IN GIFTED EDUCATION

Gain a unique insight into the different world of the gifted learner...

NATIONAL SUPPORT

**CERTIFICATE COURSE
FOR TEACHERS**



What the course offers:

Strong practical focus

Material linked to your own teaching situation & level, primary & secondary

A wealth of resources

Continuous individual guidance from experienced tutor-practitioners

Accessible anywhere, in your own time, in an easy-to-use online format

Sensible fee at \$550 + GST

INTERESTED IN ENROLLING?

Find out more on www.giftedreach.org.nz

Detailed prospectus & enrolment form downloadable from online course page

NB: Enrolments for 2012 now open.

Earlybird discount available till December 15.

REACH for the best in gifted education

TEACHER'S BOOK RESOURCES

DID YOU KNOW ...

GIFTED KIDS PROGRAMME (GKP) LIBRARY

Whether you are interested in books to support teaching gifted students in the regular classroom, curriculum design for GATE programmes, or are undertaking academic study in gifted education, there are books in the GKP library that are sure to meet your needs.

To view available books, go to: <http://www.giftnet.ac.nz/library.php>

GKP contributing schools receive this service free of charge. For teachers from other schools, there is a charge of \$5 per book for a one month loan period or \$50 per annum for a school membership, which entitles all staff at that school to borrow books for no charge.

To borrow a book or arrange a school membership, email: rachel@giftedkids.co.nz

**THE TEACHER'S
BOOKSHELF ...**

NZAGC NATIONAL LIBRARY www.giftedchildren.org.nz/library

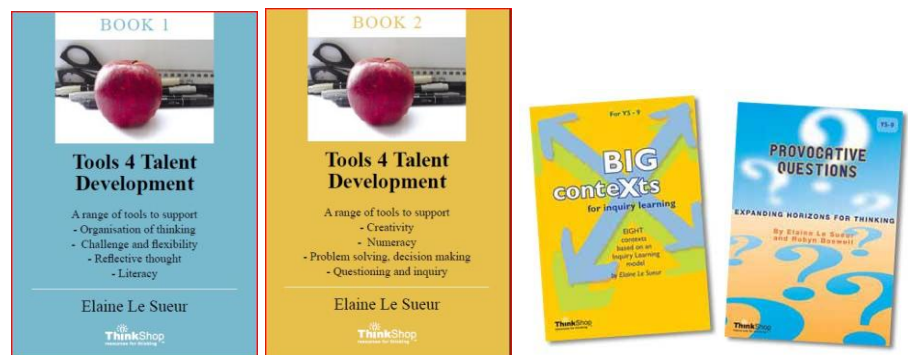
The only cost to borrow books from this library is the postage to return them. Books are on loan for a month. The website has a great search facility. You can recommend books for purchase or review a book that you have borrowed. The friendly librarian is Vicki Cooper. Two great new additions to the library include ...

Making Great Kids Greater ; easing the burden of being gifted by Dorothy Sisk.

Smart Kids with Learning Difficulties – overcoming obstacles and realising potential by Weinfeld et al.

THINK SHOP

Elaine’s books for teachers are available from www.thinks.org



OVERSEAS CONFERENCE



10th International Dabrowski Conference

July 19th to July 21st, 2012

Colorado, USA

**Sponsored by the Institute for the Study of Advanced
Development**

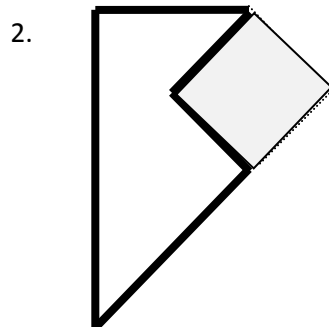
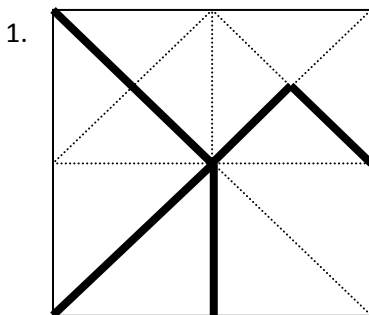
Registration begins January 1, 2012

<http://www.gifteddevelopment.com/Dabrowski/index.html>

ARTICLE THE SHAPE OF GIFTED EDUCATION.

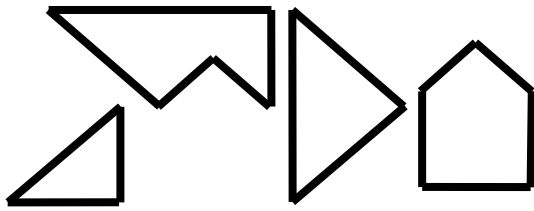
©Elaine Le Sueur, 2011.

PREPARATION : Cut a square of card into four pieces following the black lines on the template..



Using this shape piece, place it on a piece of card in a different colour to complete a small square. Cut this small square shape out. You will then have 5 shaped pieces. Keep the small square separate. You will need one square for each set of shapes but don't introduce it until the square using 4 pieces has been completed.

Let's start with the basic shape of things and relate it to education in a regular classroom. There are only four things that we, as educators, are able to have some degree of control over in meeting learner needs. They are the *content*, or what is taught ; the *process*, relating to the way that it is taught; the *product*, which is what is expected as the result ; and the *learning environment* or where the learning might occur. Your first task is to organise these elements in the shape of a square. Use all four initial shapes to do this.



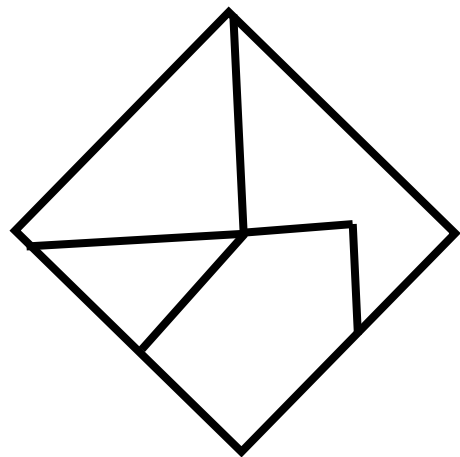
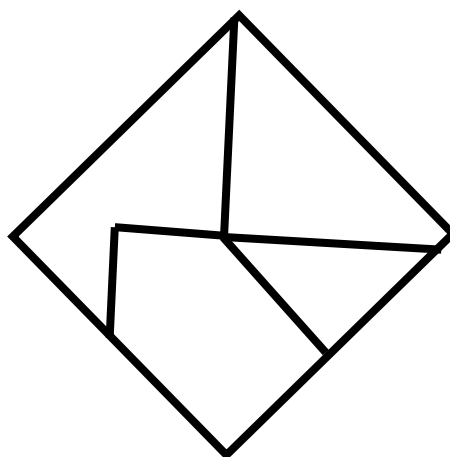
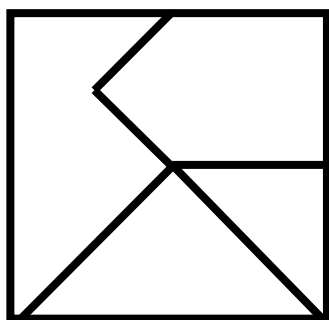
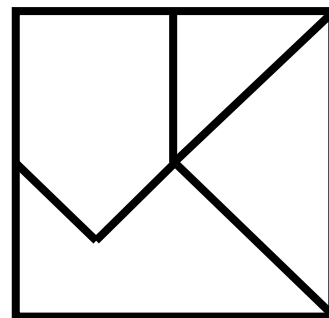
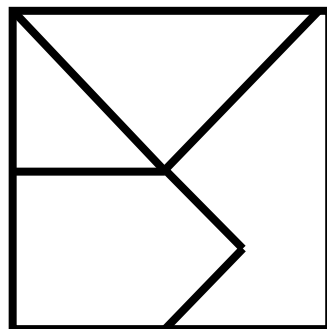
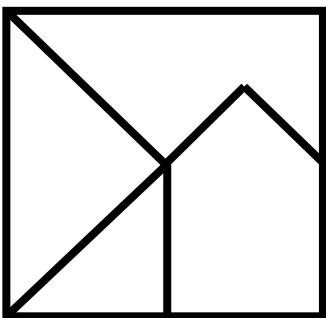
We assume from this instruction that the pieces will fit together. Our learning experience with mathematical concepts encourages the belief that this task is achievable. In fact, when you are successful then you quickly come to the conclusion that the job is readily done and you are satisfied. That is human nature. But did you stop to think that there was some choice within this structure? Classrooms are not all the same.

You were asked to use your pieces to make a square, but did everyone put those pieces in the same place?

Did anyone turn the square on its side for fun and make a diamond before quietly falling into line?

Or twist it round once it was done?

Apart from the requirement to arrange the pieces into a square, there were no rules or guidelines provided for *how* this was to be done. All you have to rely on is your past experience and knowledge of a square shape.



We may have mirror images, but what we have achieved is agreement over what constitutes a square. (Is a square turned on its side still a square or is it now something else)? All the pieces were used. We have no leftovers. We have no overlaps. We have not left anything out. We have things sorted. In the language of geometry ...Q.E.D. (Quod Erat Demonstrandum ... Latin: That which was to be demonstrated.)

But what if it was your students demonstrating their understanding of the properties of a square? And what if one is a recent arrival to New Zealand? This student may well understand the concept of 'square' in her native language but is not

able to show you that she knows because she didn't understand your instruction at the beginning . Would she have looked to see what her neighbour was doing and played with the pieces then realised what was expected, and put them together? How would you adapt your teaching practice to allow for this? *What* is taught needs to focus on the student's language acquisition so that you can communicate. *How* this is done will affect how effective you become and the environment will determine whether she is understood when she communicates with you in an unfamiliar tongue. Success depends on adaptation between the learning environment and learner need. Once the need has been recognised then the challenge is to diagnose what can be done to support learner need. Good teachers of students from non English speaking backgrounds are those who understand the difficulties that are being faced and adapt accordingly.

'Where there is a will there is a way.'

What if you thought that the initial task was so simple that the result was self evident, and you didn't see any point in doing it because it would only take you seconds to put it together if you needed to once you understood where I was going with reflection on the process? Did it annoy you that you were being asked to do something that you could do so easily that it seemed a waste of your time? Or did you finish the task in seconds and then have to wait while others caught up? What did you do while you were waiting? What strategies did you use to fill the 'waiting time?' Are any of these reminiscent of behaviours you have seen in students in your classroom? Reflecting on our own behaviour can lead to new insights into the behaviours of others.

Now let's introduce our fifth puzzle piece.



Having created our basic square from the four pieces provided, make a square with five pieces. Add your fifth piece using the same parameters... Use all five pieces. No leftovers. No overlaps. Nothing left out. Allow yourself time to work on this.

Some will find the task too difficult and will give up after a brief attempt. Most will use a trial and error methodology to get things into shape. Some will insist that it can't be done anyway while others will persist, comfortable with the notion that just because they haven't managed to solve it doesn't mean that it can't be done. A few people get lucky but are surprised when they are successful. Occasionally someone is able intuitively to put it together because the solution seems obvious to him /her. Collaboration may be useful because it allows you to learn from mistakes (yours and others). Eventually, however, all will come to the realisation that this new piece of information requires old theory to be modified or discarded, and that if you keep doing things the way that you did them before then you will keep getting the same result and a solution will continue to elude you.

Think of the fifth puzzle piece as a gifted/ talented/ able student.

Fitting this piece into the existing structure is not easy, but neither is it impossible. If the student has been masquerading as one of the four initial puzzle pieces then a shift in perspective is needed to cope with the direction change. Once he/she has been recognised as having an ability that stands out in relation to the others, it becomes necessary for something different to happen in order to restore equilibrium again. For many classroom teachers it is a struggle to cope with gifted students 'inside the box' because of the increased demands of today's learning environment and the perception that further individualisation of the classroom curriculum will mean an even bigger time commitment. There is a need to find ways to work smarter, not harder.

But wait ... there's more!

If we were to have a sixth puzzle piece, what shape would it need to be in order to maintain the integrity of a square? This shape represents the student's culture. It is often the missing piece in our puzzle that is gifted education ... especially if we are unable to envisage what it might look like. The challenge is to ensure that our identification procedures allow us to recognise giftedness from a cultural point of view, and that involves finding out what that point of view *is*.

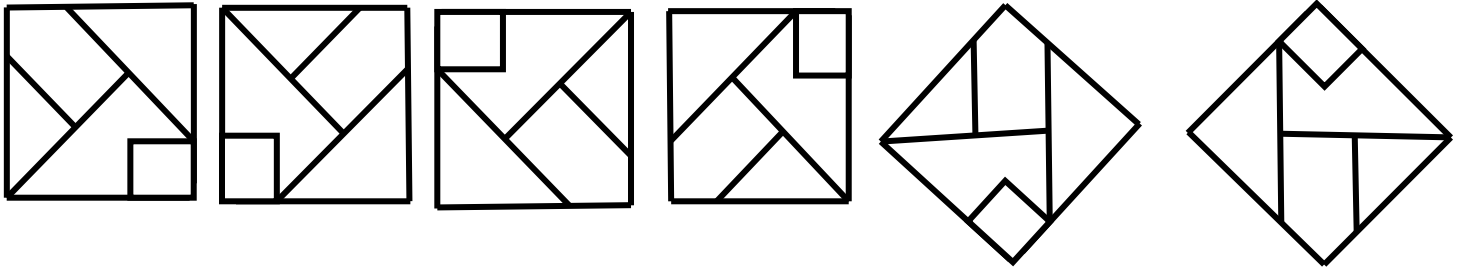
All this, of course, assumes that you managed to complete the second challenge with five pieces!




Classroom teachers are shape shifters. They are able to influence the outcomes for students in the classroom just as we were able to piece together the puzzle pieces to make a square. It is a matter of perception.

How well do **you** know **your** students? How will you go about finding out ?
That is the current reality.

If you would like targeted professional development to explore these issues then the author is available for consultancy services. justelaine@xtra.co.nz or Elaine@giftededucationservices.co.nz

If you need 'an answer' then look at the other puzzle pieces and think about 'corners' or 90° angles from another perspective and it will fall into place, but not necessarily the *same* place for everyone.



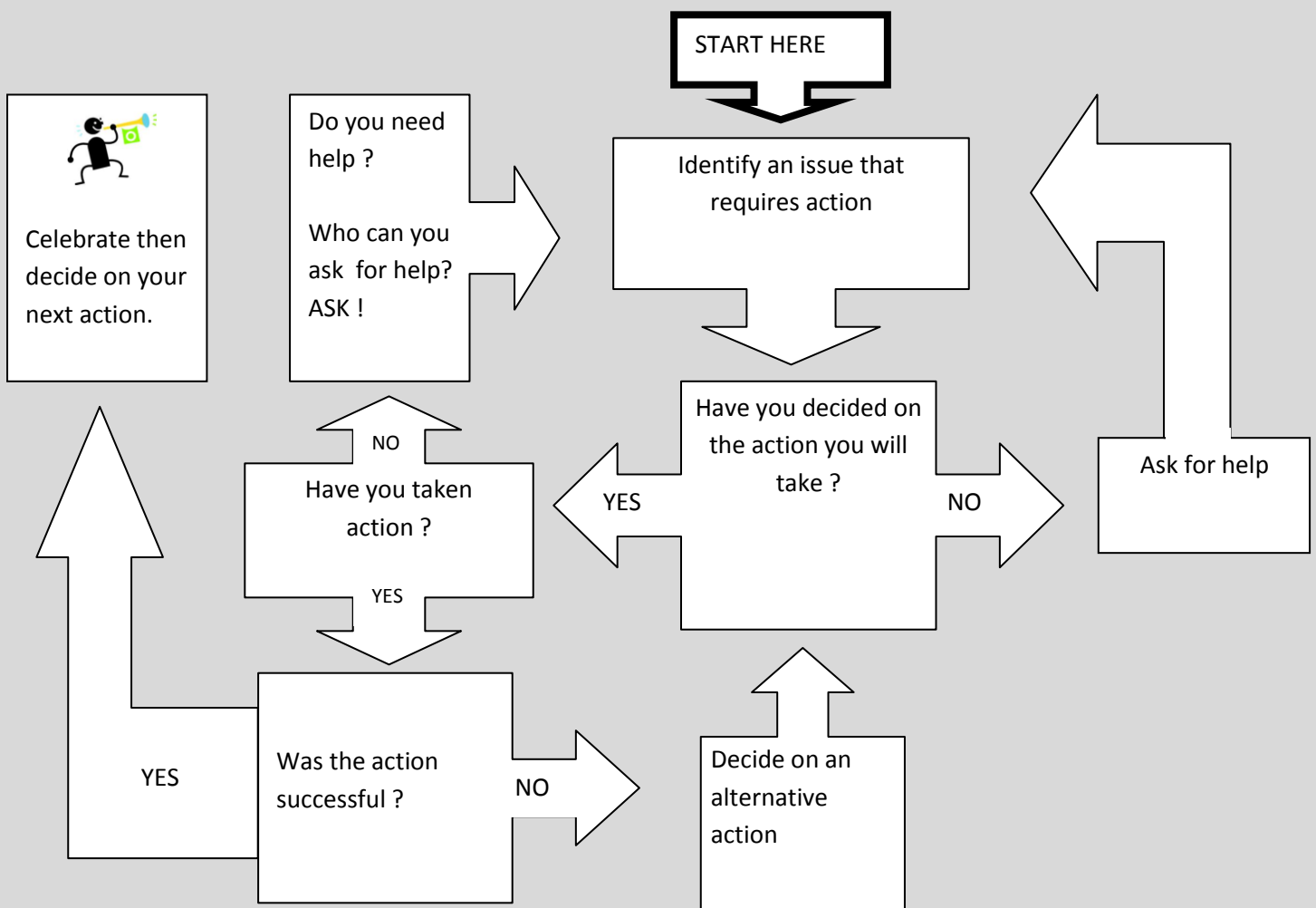
<p>GENERAL WEBSITES OF INTEREST for gifted issues.</p>	<p>HOAGIES GIFTED EDUCATION WEBSITE</p>  <p>http://www.hoagiesgifted.org This is the 'all-things-gifted' international resource portal that you have been looking for and offers resources, articles, books and links for parents, teachers and children. A fantastic collection to spend some time browsing through. Follow @HoagiesGifted on Twitter, Hoagies' Gifted Education Page fan page on Facebook, or Carolyn K. on Linked In.</p> <p>GIFTED DEVELOPMENT CENTER</p>  <p>Dr Linda Silverman's website. Linda has over 25 years experience counselling gifted children. Great source of information and strategies for helping visual spatial learners</p>
<p>MORE SCIENCE & MUSEUM WEBSITES OF INTEREST</p>	<p>http://www.amnh.org/ology/- American Museum of Natural History. Brilliant interactive site. Choose whichever ology you're into, e.g. Astronomy, the Earth, Genetics; the list seems endless.</p>  <p>http://www.hhmi.org/coolscience</p>

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids> Watch live video of polar bears in Manitoba, Canada.

<http://www.brainpop.com> BrainPOP creates animated, curriculum-based content to engage students and support educators. Check out the free film resources in a range of curriculum areas

<http://www.show.me.uk> - Everything on this site is from museums and galleries in the UK. Try an easy video step-by-step origami guide from CLEO and learn what the lotus meant to Ancient Egyptians. See examples of writing from 5,000 years ago and more with the British Museum's Young explorers' video A brief history of writing. Check out the amazing artwork by primary school kids in Take One Picture at the National Gallery in London.

ARE YOU TAKING ACTION FOR YOUR ABLE KIDS YET?



END

