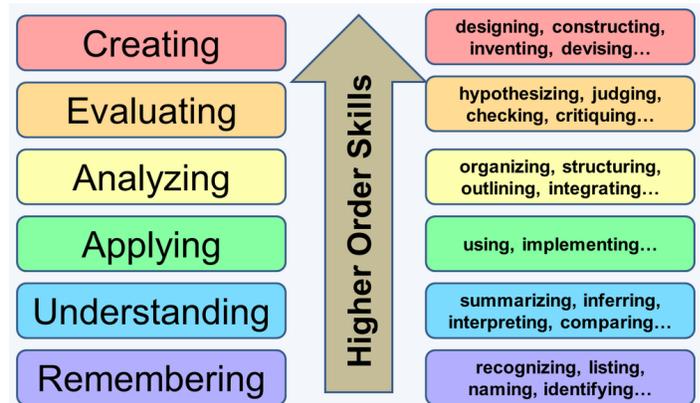


Ability Grouping

A classroom strategy for grouping students by need, interest, or ability. Groups can be formed and reformed to meet varied instructional purposes. Ability grouping is not synonymous with “tracking.” *CAG advocates the flexible ability grouping of gifted students. They need to be in groups with other gifted students for an integral part of their school day. Ability grouping may take many forms such as cluster grouping, part-time grouping, special day classes, and special schools. (See also Heterogeneous/Homogeneous Grouping, Flexible Grouping, and Tracking.)*

Bloom’s Taxonomy

A framework teachers use to focus on higher order thinking. By providing a hierarchy of 6 different levels, it can assist teachers in designing performance tasks, crafting questions for conferring with students, and providing feedback on student work. It can help teachers promote more complex thinking (instead of simply remembering facts) which is especially appropriate for gifted students. *CAG supports the use of Bloom’s Taxonomy as a tool to provide more effective and appropriate curricular planning for gifted students.*



Compacting

A system in which students are given the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of skills and concepts required in the regular curriculum rather than forcing them to repeat already learned material. By demonstrating the level of proficiency in the basic curriculum the student can then be allowed to use instructional time to engage in more appropriate and challenging learning experiences. *CAG supports the use of compacting as an important way to match the learning needs of gifted students with the content and skills offered in the classroom. Gifted learners must continue to be given stimulating educational experiences appropriate to their levels of ability if they are to realize their potential.*

Curriculum Compacting

A strategy used to give students validation for what they already know. It allows students who demonstrate mastery to omit portions of assigned curriculum, or to move more quickly through curriculum than would be typical. Students are thus able to “buy time” which can be used to accelerate content or to pursue enrichment activities while the unit is being taught to other students. *CAG supports the use of curriculum compacting as one means of providing appropriate learning experiences for advanced students. It is important, however, that the “time bought” be used by students to pursue their studies in greater depth and complexity, and to further their own educational goals. Students should not be expected to use the extra time to serve as teachers’ helpers, to tutor less advanced classmates, or to relearn work already mastered.*

Differentiation

The modification of the curriculum to meet the unique needs of learners. It may include modifications in complexity, depth, pacing, and selecting among, rather than covering all, of the curriculum areas. The modification is dependent on the individual needs of the students. *CAG advocates for differentiation for all students in need of curriculum modification. There should be multiple paths for success in all classrooms. The major purpose of differentiation in the gifted program is to challenge the gifted student. Educational practices such as authentic assessment, collaborative learning, ungraded curriculum, and thematic interdisciplinary curriculum are not differentiated within themselves, but they can facilitate differentiation for gifted students.*

Heterogeneous and Homogeneous Grouping

Two strategies for grouping students in the classroom to facilitate learning. Heterogeneous grouping refers to grouping students by age with no regard to demonstrated ability or level of knowledge.

Homogeneous grouping refers to grouping by the demonstrated need, ability, or interest of the students. *CAG advocates for flexible grouping of students for at least some part of the educational day in an appropriate setting, based on a commonality of the students' intellectual, academic, and/or affective (social-emotional) needs. There should be defined educational experiences related to the criteria used for grouping.*

Individualization

A strategy that provides a specific program to meet the particular needs, interests, and/or abilities of an individual student for some part of his or her educational experience. It does not mean, however, that every child is working in isolation on a different level or a different subject at all times. It does mean that students are working with appropriate materials on levels of learning commensurate with their assessed ability, needs, and/or interests. *CAG supports individualization that is differentiated and results in challenging activities or assignments that are interactive and open-ended in content, process, and/or product. Individualization can facilitate the education of gifted learners by utilizing mentorships, internships, independent research, and early college entrance programs among other learning strategies.*

Rubric

A guide or scale for scoring products or outcomes during the assessment process. Each interval along this assessment scale represents a specific level of learning from minimal to exemplary. The levels of learning are accompanied by specific descriptors of the type and quality of work expected in attaining the level of learning described. *CAG supports the use of rubrics to provide gifted students and their teachers with a clear understanding of what is considered outstanding work. The highest levels of a rubric or scoring guide can be used to set goals for and define the level of performance of gifted students in a given area.*

Scaffolding

An instructional strategy that provides carefully structured and sequenced support for learning new and increasingly more difficult tasks. This approach places the teacher in a collaborative, interactive role with students. Emphasis is on teacher modeling, extending, rephrasing, questioning, praising, and correcting, rather than on the teacher as the evaluator. *CAG supports scaffolding as an effective instructional model for classes with gifted students. It allows and encourages a shared exchange of ideas between teacher and students as students take on increasing responsibility for their own learning. This method encourages higher order reasoning as well as basic skills learning.*

Tiered Assignments

The practice of providing different assignments that reflect the individual level of the student's knowledge of the content or skill in the core curriculum. While all students within the classroom work toward a common goal, tiered assignments allow each student to work at a level of difficulty, complexity, or depth appropriate to his or her understanding. *CAG supports tiered assignments as a way of challenging and meeting the individual learning needs of gifted students. Tiered lessons allow students with varying levels of knowledge within a classroom to meet common goals.*