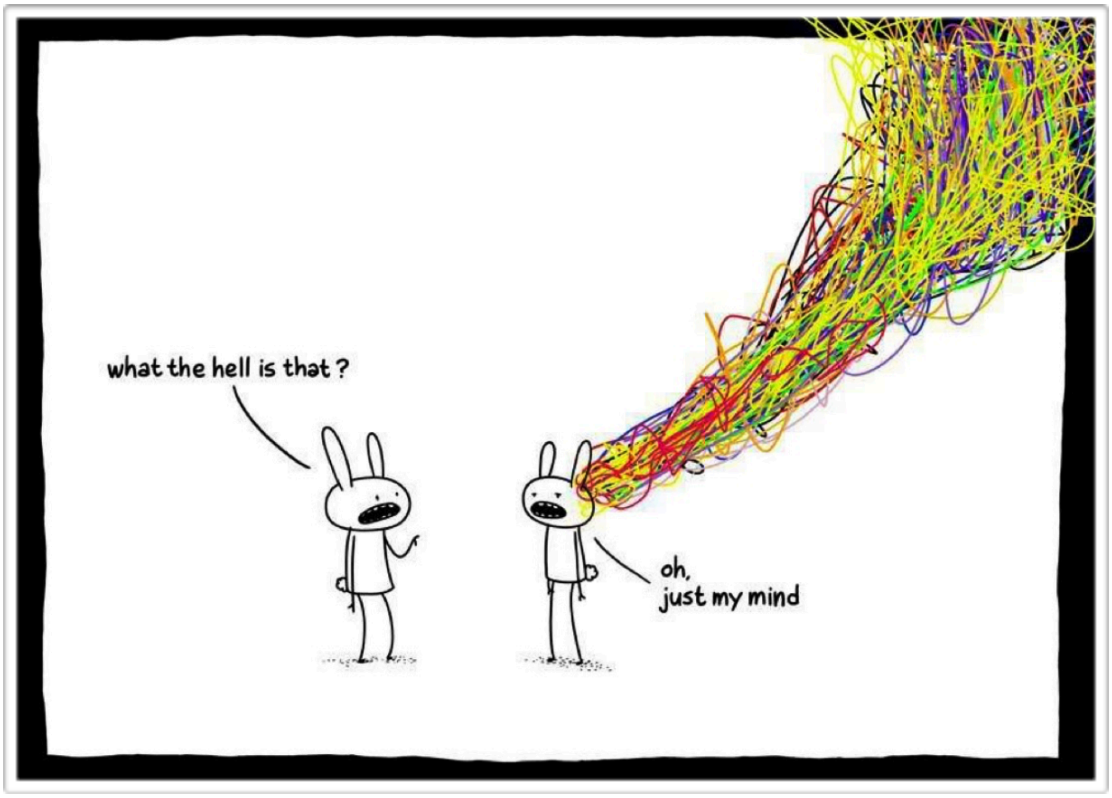
BRAINS IN ACTION

WORKING WITH HIGH ACHIEVERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL



Source: Powerpoint presentation made by Roland Persson (Sweden, 2018)

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project

In 2016 we started a KAII Erasmus+ project “Brains in Action” (“Exchanging New Ways of Learning and Teaching for High Achievers in a European School Network”). All four partner schools from Belgium, Sweden, Germany and Slovenia discovered there was not enough knowledge about high achieving students, how to create an appropriate learning environment for them and how to keep them motivated in the school system.

We wanted to look for best practices about how to approach these students in our classrooms and in a school context. We exchanged and compared the different existing practices at our schools and how this is or could be incorporated in the school development plan and in each country’s educational policy [1]. We also looked for input from several experts in the field of giftedness. With this reader we summarized the best practices we discovered. We hope this can help teachers adapt their pedagogical approach and headmasters create an encouraging/positive teaching environment.

1.2 Target group

From the beginning we struggled with the right definition of our target group. Should we call them high achievers or should we speak of giftedness instead? Sometimes gifted students are not doing well in school, but instead are underachieving.

In our project we organised exchanges for high achieving students [2]. We prefered selecting those students, because it was easier to determine which students could participate. But the specialists we consulted during our project meetings mainly focused on gifted children. The global theory focuses on gifted children (not on high achievers), but the practical methods and approaches can also be applied for high achievers as well.

We don't pretend to have a definitive solution for this terminology problem, but while you read our work you should keep in mind that there are different types of students, that all need an individual approach.

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[1] Slovenia already had a country’s educational policy on gifted pupils, Bavaria (Germany) got it in 2017-2018, Sweden didn’t have it at all, while Belgium only had school related initiatives.

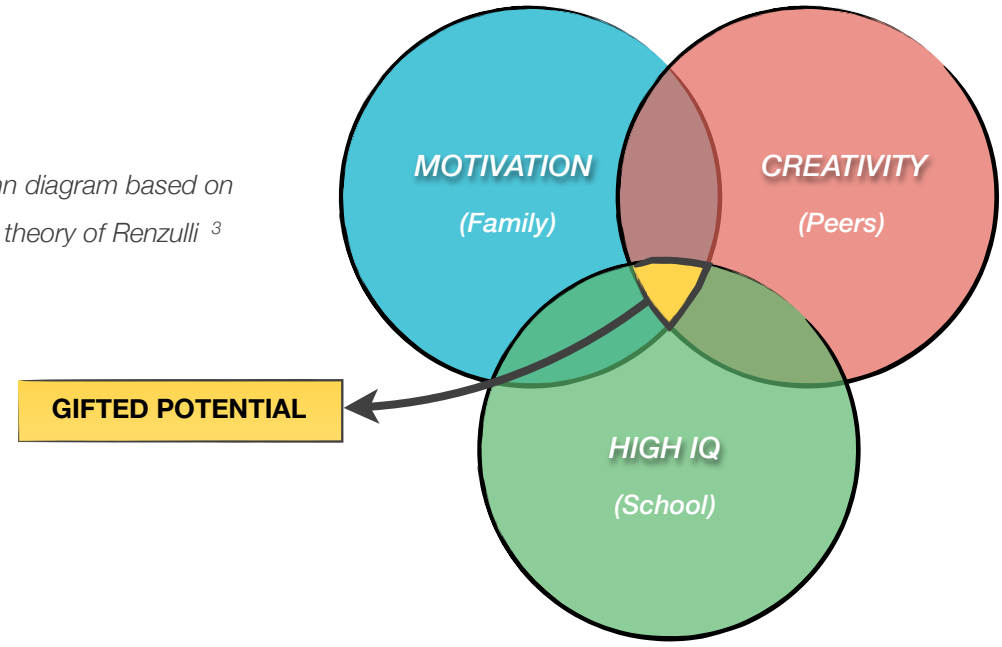
[2] We described high achieving as highly motivated, ambitious, hard working and having excellent marks at school. They also had to be socially skilled. On this website you can find more information about the project: https://brainsinaction.weebly.com.

2. Global theory on giftedness

2.1 Model for giftedness

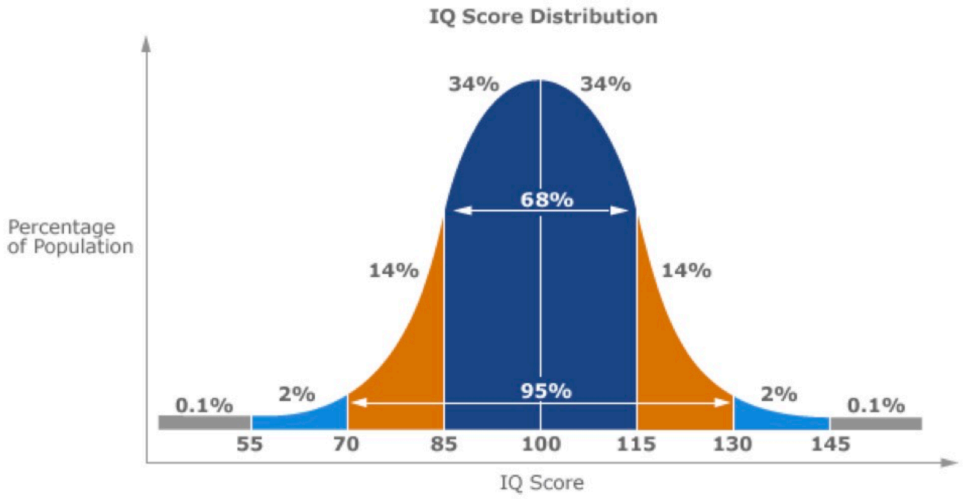
The scientific research has used different models to define giftedness. In the beginning of the 20th century most researchers focused solely on intelligence. Afterwards researchers like Renzulli added other elements that defined giftedness as a combination of different factors.

Venn diagram based on the theory of Renzulli [3]



Renzulli defines gifted potential as a cross-section of three different personal elements: high IQ (over 130), motivation and creativity. Furthermore this potential is influenced by the environment of the child, which is composed of peers, family and school. The better the environment works with the child, the better the chance that it will develop its full potential.

Source: PowerPoint presentation made by Roland Persson (Sweden, 2018)



[3] This diagram was recreated based on Renzulli's theory. The idea for the use of this graph came from a 2017 PowerPoint presentation delivered by Tessa Kieboom, who works at the University of Hasselt in Belgium.

2.2 Characteristics of gifted students

Tessa Kieboom, a Belgian professor and expert in the field of giftedness, determines the following characteristics of gifted children:

- **Strong consciousness**: gifted children are extremely conscious of what happens around them.
- **Feeling of justice**: for example they are very critical of teachers, when they break promises made in class.
- **Sensitive**: not in the sense of high sensitivity, but they deeply appreciate honesty and authenticity, because it is important for them that your thoughts match your behaviour.
- **Critical sense**: very direct in their communication, they focus on facts and figures, not on feelings.
- **High standard**: the higher the IQ, the more complex task you can set.
- **Eager to learn**: if they get enough input, they will stay motivated.

All these characteristics make the gifted child feel different.

2.3 Embodios

Based on this model and these characteristics Kieboom develops the concept of embodios. These are possible pitfalls gifted children encounter to develop their full potential.

- **See yourself as a standard**: they don’t understand why other children need more time or more explanation.
- **Making mistakes**: because of their high abilities they are not used to failure, they have to learn to deal with making mistakes, and should be obliged to take risks, and leave their comfort zone.
- **Social skills**: they don’t focus on emotions in conversations, but rather on facts, this way they often disregard social (non-verbal) signals.
- **Achieving takes time**: they normally achieve results very fast, but if the subject matter becomes more complex, they need more time to learn, it is important that they realise that achieving takes time.
- **Overachieving**: some gifted children want the best possible results and cannot stop studying, they have to learn when to stop.
- **Resistance**: they can be very strong in discussions (content) and sometimes be very harsh or impolite (form).
- **Empty toolbox**: they don't develop study methods or strategies, because they understand everything right away, but if the matter gets more complex and voluminous, they will not be able to cope with this, because they have not acquired the right learning skills.

2.4 Types of gifted children

Dr. Kieboom distinguishes three types of gifted children. We will briefly take a look at them, because they all have their own behaviour and embodios.

Independent

Independent gifted children: characteristics

- Only willing to perform when benefits are clear and when interested in the topic.
- Show self-confidence + willing to leave their comfort zone (if wellbeing is good).

Independent gifted children: embodios

- Will not perform when not interested (very difficult to motivate them in such cases).
- Can overachieve in some cases and not achieve at all in other (sometimes happy with average results + don't see need to develop study skills; → empty toolbox).
- Resistance (when they don't feel the need to work on a topic or if it's not necessary to do an effort).
- When out of balance: average to bad performance + withdraw easily.
- If interested or if they see the importance of a task: they don't lose interest easily and don't get stressed out.

Dependent

Dependent gifted children: characteristics

- Scared to achieve (due to fear of the next expectation, that will come right away).
- Range of achievement usually more limited.
- Not as self-confident as the independent type.

Dependent gifted children: embodios

- Feel the need for freedom.
- Often perform, but mostly when not expected, when they don't feel pressure or when the task is not obligatory (e.g. outside the school context).
- Need to learn that achieving takes time + importance of filling up their 'toolbox'.
- Resistance when not given a choice of when they don't see the importance of a task.
- Give up easily + run away from expectations (causes a lot of frustration and stress).
- Refuse challenge.
- Feel very insecure.

High achievers

High achievers: characteristics

- Need high achievement to feel good.
- Capable of performing when interested + when not interested (if they have confidence in their abilities).
- When self-confident: able to deal with stress (but like to be in control).

High achievers: embodios

- Overachieving
- Making a mistake = dangerous (no tools to cope with failure).
- Afraid of failing, can look for excuses.
- If wellbeing not good: tend to withdraw and start to refuse challenge.
- If lack of self-confidence: hard to perform.

NOTE: in general it is difficult to put a lot of gifted children of this type in the same class.

2.5 Underachievers

This dependent type can be compared to what is often referred to as underachievers. When we visited the Maria Theresia Gymnasium in München, we got more information on this type of students, that we would like to share in this reader.

Underachievers are highly gifted students who are not able to transfer their potentials into excellent marks. There is a discrepancy between their potential (competences) and their performance (school achievement). That means that you cannot rely on identifying them via school achievement or excellent marks. So you need other methods to identify them.

Possible causes for underachieving:

- Genetic disposition
- Medical reasons, e.g. ADHD, dyslexia
- Lack of acceptance by the teacher
- Disadvantageous educational style (authoritarian, permissive, neglecting); inconsistent educational behaviour (father versus mother)
- Divorce/separation of the parents, conflict potentials, lack of role models
- Lack of support concerning school / family life (e.g. migrants)
- Lack of matching the student with learning environment (also mental underload)
- Atmosphere in class, rejection by class/school mates (outsider)

Possible characteristics of underachieving (see also Kieboom's embodios):

- Negative self-concept
- Generally emotional and social problems (anxieties, minor self-competences)
- Low self-control / self-regulation (especially when it is boring or mental overload)
- Less success-oriented, more failure-oriented
- Distinct school reluctance, low interest in school
- Negative attitude towards everything concerning school
- Ineffective work habits

3. Challenges in teaching gifted students

There are a lot of problems you encounter as a teacher when working with gifted students.
Some of these problems are to be found on the level of society, some in classroom. We will try to point out some of these problems and provide some examples of coping strategies how to deal with them.

3.1 Image

In some countries like Sweden it is difficult within the cultural framework and its view of equality to discuss the topic of gifted children. Persson warns that talented students tend to hide their uniqueness. Someone who is perceived as being too different in any group also risks becoming the focus of bullying and social exclusion. Thus they employ a variety of coping strategies trying to fit into society. Teachers must therefore never forget that every child has a powerful urge of wanting to be like everyone else, so they should organise work in class in the way which does not expose or isolate them any further.

If you differentiate in your class, try to do it for as much students as possible and not for one student. That way it will be accepted more easily.

Try to see giftedness as something that is extraordinary as well as great performances in sports or music. Stimulate gifted children in excelling in intellectual tasks.

3.2 Need for individual approach

Working with gifted pupils is a challenge because there are a lot of different types (cf.Kieboom) who all have their own behaviour and pitfalls. As a teacher you have to find the right method that fits the pupil. If an approach works well for one student, there is no guarantee that this can be transferred to another.

For instance: gifted pupils often demand a complex task. This could evoke different behaviour: some pupils become perfectionist and they will lose themselves in the task, while other pupils will not start the task because of their fear of failure. So it is not always a good solution to give gifted pupils more (difficult) exercises.

For instance: You could expect that gifted students feel the need to be challenged because of their high IQ and as a teacher you could allow them to do something special. But if the student is demotivated (cf. underachiever), this does not work.

3.3 Social skills

One of the biggest problems you can encounter is the lack of social skills. Gifted children often feel more at ease with older children or adults, so they encounter difficulties when they are with students of their own age. This might cause problems with social interaction in class.

You could use improvisational theatre to enhance their social skills. In this way they learn to observe the actions of other people and react accordingly.

There are a lot of different approaches on how to group them in classes. You could choose to cluster them in one class [4]. The advantage of putting all gifted pupils in one group is that it is good for their emotional well being. Social interaction however can become a problem: it can be more difficult to work with them in class, because they don't cooperate very well. They are too competitive. So putting them together in a group is not always a solution.

4. Possible approaches

In this part we try to offer a whole range of possible approaches for gifted children to be used in and outside of class. All these approaches are not restricted only to working with gifted students. More information about the approaches in our different countries can be found in the bibliography.

4.1 In class: acceleration

Following the regular curriculum at a faster pace and therefore graduating at an earlier age, e.g. premature or early school enrollment and/or skipping a grade. Kieboom advises to limit this acceleration to a maximum of two years.

[4] Maria-Theresia Gymnasium in Germany (which we visited during our project) had this approach of clustering gifted students in one class.

4.2 In class: in-course differentiation

This is a very broad concept, which covers a whole range of possible approaches. It can be an individual intervention for one high-achieving student, or an approach that changes the entire set-up of your teaching.

In-course differentiation strategies all have in common, that you don't have the same approach for each student, but that you try to adapt your way of teaching and your course material to the needs of the different students. According to Kieboom, this differentiation can be done in pace or in complexity.

Pace

High-achieving students can process the subject matter independently at their own pace (faster). This way, they will have time left, that can be used for enrichment (e.g. another project or more difficult exercises).

Complexity

You can compact basic exercises and enrich with complex exercises. One possible approach is to let high-achieving students start with the most complex exercises. If they cannot do it, they must return to the basic exercises.

Possible pitfalls

Students have to be interested in the additional exercises they get. Otherwise, they will not find extra motivation. Therefore it is important that you don't just shower these students with supplementary exercises of the same degree of difficulty as the normal exercises. It has to be a more challenging task at another level, not just extra work.

Adapt your approach to the type of gifted children (cf. 2.4 Kieboom). The achiever type will agree with more exercises, but the dependent or independent type want less exercises instead of more, because they often find their challenges outside school as school is already awful enough as it is for them.
Teachers often expect very good results of gifted students before they allow them to do something ‘special’, but when the student is demotivated, this does not work.

Gifted children can show resistance to differentiation, because they don't want to get exceptions. Therefore it is better to try and differentiate for several students together, because that way they will not stand out as much.
It is important that students are coached in these extra exercises or projects. They need feedback on how they have worked, so they can learn from it.
However, the end result should not be that the teacher has to do a lot of extra work. It is the student that has to put in the extra effort. That will not be a problem, because high-achieving students will want to show their skills, abilities and knowledge.

Concrete methods for in-course differentiation

1. Enrichment

High-achieving students get more challenging tasks, work with different, more challenging materials, work out creative projects. You can collect a sample case with challenging, detailed, scientific articles on the topic, you are working on in class.
Examples of creative projects for languages are writing a play or a school newspaper in foreign languages. It can also be challenging for students to practise their language skills with native speakers. The eTwinning-platform also offers a lot of possibilities to communicate with students from other countries. Students can also learn (or get acquainted with the basics of) a different foreign language.
Examples of creative projects for humanities are simulation games, where the participants play the stock market or simulate the European Parliament.
Examples of creative projects for maths and sciences are Fermi-tasks, where students have to make a quantitative estimation of a problem, for which accurate data don't exist.

2. Student-centered forms of teaching and learning

You can give (some or all) students differentiated assignments in school or at home. The important thing is that students will have a choice between different options. This will enhance their feeling of autonomy.

With a reading assignment for example you can give the students a choice between different possibilities to process the text. Creative ways of working out the assignment will motivate students. In the Maria Theresia Gymnasium we saw an example of differentiation for a creative reading assignment (in annex 2).

You can work out an individual learning path for an entire week, that contains obligatory and optional tasks, and with a lot of possibilities for being creative. That way you give leeway for students exceptional curiosity.

You can use formative assessment as a teaching method in your class. The teacher provides opportunities for students to determine their personal learning goals which will demonstrate their knowledge and later gives individual feedback and provides recommendation for further learning. Students ask themselves questions, such as: *What do I know? > What knowledge/skills do I want to acquire? > In what way? ….* to meet the learning goals. This approach strongly supports the autonomy and self-responsibility of the students. You can find more information on formative assessment in annex 1.

Another possibility to differentiate is two-phases-teaching. The students decide in which group they want to be during the first phase: group 1 acquires knowledge by themselves and with material given by the teacher. Group 2 acquires the same knowledge in interaction with the teacher (e.g. the teacher explains the topic.). During the second phase group 1 explains to the teacher what they elaborated on their own. The teacher gives feedback. The second group does exercises/revision on what they have learned from the teacher.

3. Students as experts - cooperative learning

There is also a broad range of approaches, where you can mobilize high-achieving students as experts in your classroom.
You can use peer teaching, where students get the assignment to develop a topic individually or in group. Afterwards they become the teacher for this subject to the rest of the group. Coaching and feedback are essential in this approach.

A specific form of cooperative learning is the expert-jigsaw. Students work in groups and each group becomes expert on a specific topic, chapter, concept... .Then they break into new groups where they teach other members what they have learned in previous expert groups.

You can also develop a tutoring program, where talented students try to pass on their skills and knowledge to support weaker students.

In an enrichment project high-achieving students can develop games, assignments or tests for other students, or they can guide other students on a historical tour that they have elaborated themselves. [5]

4.3 Outside class

This part focuses on activities and approaches that can be used outside the normal classroom. However, there often are strong links with the previous section, 4.1 in class. A lot of these enrichment methods can be organised both inside and outside the classroom, for just an individual student or for an entire group. Also the student-centered forms of teaching and learning can be organised inside or outside the classroom.

Enrichment outside classroom

In the concept of a revolving door project or a flexible learning path students work through the course matter at a faster pace or are exempted for certain learning goals (or even entire courses), because they already reach the regular course objectives. Instead, they can choose topics they want to work on individually or in group. They could also attend classes in a higher grade (certain lessons or a specific topic), or in a different program. [6]
However, this approach often requires creative solutions for the time tables of different programs or grades. Other possibilities are that these students attend classes at university (see junior colleges below).

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[5] E.g. Belgium: enrichment project elaborated by a group of high-achieving Latin students. They created a school rally, based on the myth of the minotaur/labyrinth, the entire school was used as a labyrinth, the other students of their class had to solve puzzles and questions on Latin grammar and culture, to get out of the labyrinth.

[6] - E.g. Belgium: student in a science program visits classes in the economics program OR a student works through certain courses individually (does not attend classes), and passes exams earlier than other students.
- E.g. Germany: a student visits higher IT-classes during the IT-lessons of his own class, as he was three years ahead of his classmates.

Another form of enrichment is to work with extracurricular learning groups. There, students follow the regular curriculum, but on top of that they also attend a special program, where they meet like-minded students , with whom they can do different activities. Our German partner school (OMG) organises this kind of Plus Course for students that reach a minimum average note.
The enrichment activities can cover a wide range of possibilities.

This could be extracurricular activities like lectures by experts or professors in a certain field or excursions to special institutions or organisations. During our own Erasmus+-project we organized several of those visits. [7]

It could also be extracurricular study groups with special thematic main points, like drama clubs, art workshops, choir, improv theatre, chemistry club, astronomy workshop, school newspapers.

A school can also organise project days, where students (not only high achievers) work for different days on a specific project, that can be linked to a certain course or combination of courses (also see simulation games above).

There also are a lot of national and international competitions, in different subjects (maths, sciences, languages,...). As high achieving students are often very competitive, they will like to showcase their talent in these competitions. Examples of these competitions are:

Juvenes Translatores (Europe)
A competition to reward the best young translators in the European Union.
https://ec.europa.eu/info/education/skills-and-qualifications/develop-your-skills/language-skills/juvenes-translatores_en

International Language Competition (Sweden) (Sw: Språkolympiaden)
Language competition in German, Spanish, French, English and Swedish.
https://ilcompetition.se/

Enrichment can also be offered through student academies and summer programmes.

Germany

- *Deutsche Schülerakademie* — *https://www.deutsche-schuelerakademie.de/*
- *House of Little Explorers* — *http://www.haus-der-kleinen-forscher.de/de/*
- *Children's University* — *http://www.die-kinder-uni.de/html/vorlesungsverzeichnis*

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[7] Examples from Germany:
- *How to become a ... Astrophysicist* (Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics)
- *Scientist for a day* (Deutsches Museum, München)
- *Photon Lab* (Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics)

Examples from Belgium:
- Visit to the European Parliament (Brussels) + meeting with the then vice-prime minister Peeters
- *How to become a ... Archaeologist* (University Leuven) + workshop hieroglyphs

Examples from Sweden:
- H*ow to become a... journalist/editor* (newspaper Mariestads-Tidningen)
- Visit to the radio station Skaraborg

Belgium

- *Children's University (University of Antwerp)*
  https://www.uantwerpen.be/nl/evenementen/kinderuniversiteit-antwerpen/

Sweden

- *Young Researchers (Sw: Unga Forskare)* *https://ungaforskare.se/*
  A nationwide organization inspiring young people in Maths, Science and Technology

Slovenia

- *Rast ('Develop your talent')* *http://www.projekt-rast.si/*
  A hub of activities for gifted students
- *Young researchers* *https://www.zotks.si/raziskovalci/novice*
- *Summer school University of Ljubljana* *https://www.uni-lj.si/studij/poletne_sole*

A lot of universities offer different possibilities for high-achieving secondary school students through junior colleges. Often students can already earn study credits for future studies at this university.

Germany

- *Research projects for students at thal University in Munich*
  http://tumkolleg.ovtg.de/
- *Offers of the junior academy in Munich*
  https://www.iis.fraunhofer.de/de/jobs/schueler/veranstundprakt/juniorakademie.html

Belgium

- *Junior college KULeuven / Kulak*
- *Thomas More Junior University College*
  https://www.thomasmore.be/site/junior-university-college
- *Honoursaanbod Universiteit Antwerpen*
  https://www.uantwerpen.be/nl/onderwijs/aanbod/honoursaanbod/leerlingen-secundair-onderwijs/

Sweden

- *Summer Research Camp*
  Young people take part in one research project at Karolinska Institutet University (Stockholm)
  https://utbildning.ki.se/sommarforskarskola-for-gymnasieelever

The Netherlands

The University of Groningen (Netherlands) also offers web classes (available in English) twice a year. These web classes are designed to give you a look at the first year of study. They last 4 weeks and during this time you will get 4 assignments lasting about 2-3 hours each. These assignments can be completed by reading articles and scientific papers as well as watching videos.

https://www.rug.nl/education/scholierenacademie/scholieren/webklassen/wat-is-een-webklas

Student-centered forms of teaching

Atelier hours are another approach that puts the students at the heart of the pedagogical process. This can be compared to formative assessment, but it can also be organised separately from the normal classroom activities.

This learning atelier contains materials with (challenging) tasks. During an atelier lesson the teacher is a mentor/ coach meaning she/he supports the students with their work on the material and with the methods how to solve problems. The students are free to choose the order of their revision. Important for planning, structuring, documentation and evaluation of work progress is a log book (with a week aim). The teacher uses the log book to give feedback attitudes to learning and working. The student uses it for self reflection and evaluation of her/ his work progress.

Learning contracts are voluntary, student-completed documents that outline actions the learner promises to take in a course to achieve academic success. This contract is signed by the student, the instructor, and (optionally) the parent. Benefits of such contracts are that they provide academic structure and support, motivate struggling learners by having them pledge publicly to engage in specific, positive study and learning behaviors, and serve as a vehicle to bring teachers and students to agreement on what course goals are important and how to achieve them.

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- PERSSON, ROLAND (1997). Annorlunda land: Särbegåvningens psykologi : Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell ("Different Country" On the psychology of giftedness)
- Filurum praktisk pedagogik https://www.facebook.com/groups/222669741154997/
  → Facebook group for schools and parents highlighting literature, seminars etc on giftedness.
- Särskilt begåvade elever (Gifted pupils)
  → Practical guidelines from the Swedish National Agency for Education https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/inspiration-och-stod-i-arbetet/stod-i-arbetet/sarskilt-begavade-elever

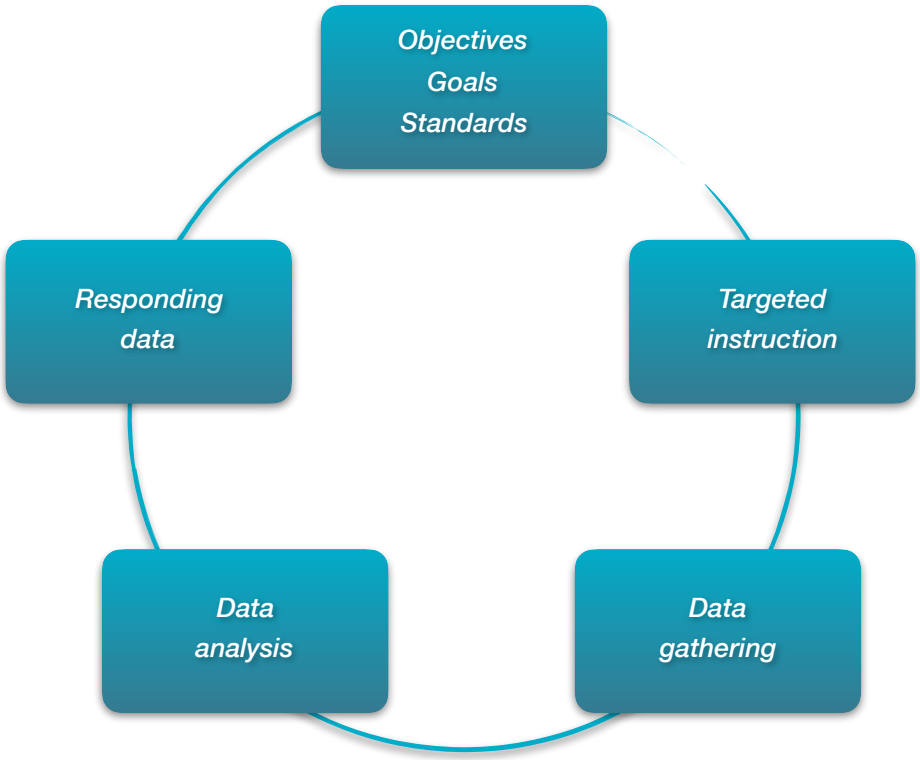
6. Annexes

Annex 1: formative assessment for highly talented students

Formative assessment (FA) is a way of teaching that uses informal assessment strategies to gather information about students' progress and to what extent they have attained the set goals by following a set of criteria. Based on that, the teacher adapts the instruction and provides opportunities for students to determine their personal learning goals which will demonstrate their knowledge (skills, competences etc.). The teacher gives individual feedback to students and provides recommendations for further learning. Students ask themselves questions, such as What am I learning? Why? What will I have to know/understand/… to meet the learning goals?

FA plays an important role in classes where students have diverse abilities, interests, levels of motivation and readiness to learn. The teachers uses FA to find out what each students needs in order to be successful.

The elements of FA



'What does a student need to be successful?' is one of the key questions for the teacher to get familiar with the needs and individual characteristics of each student and to take these into account when he/she plans and carries out lessons. FA is one of the possibilities to motivate and encourage highly gifted students to upgrade their knowledge/skills/competences , to be successful and to feel accepted. The gifted need challenges, therefore they have to be incorporated into each element of FA.

Planning the goals

Students think about what they know, what they wish to learn and how to prove it. The support of the teacher is necessary to advise, encourage and mentor the students. Thus they can choose the level of difficulty of the learning goals and are autonomous in doing this.

Planning the learning goals, topic 'Work and jobs'

What do I know?	*What knowledge/skills do I want to acquire?*	*In what way?*
• *Greetings (formal, informal)* • *List professions* • *Be engaged in a conversation* • *Write a CV (Europass)*	• *Business communication* • *Get to know unusual professions* • *Find a job in a German speaking country* • *Take part in a job interview*	• *Listening comprehension tasks, dialogues* • *Professions: students' oral presentations* • *Find vacant positions on the internet, choose a job in present it in the classroom* • *Job interview: watch videos, handouts, simulation, students' feedback*

Learning outcomes

Students prove the acquired knowledge by doing research work, oral presentations, products (e.g. writing mock tests), carrying out interviews etc. It is important that the learning process is carried out individually, ie in a way that suits the student. He/She is autonomous and adopts responsibility for his learning.

Feedback

While working on and presenting the results/learning outcomes (presentations, texts, products, research papers etc.), the students is provided with the teacher's and other students' feedback, which serves as direction and guideline for future work.

Activities: questioning

The teacher systematically assesses students, ie gathers information about student learning by asking open and problem questions which enhance the thinking skills (using Bloom's Taxonomy), and encourages the students to pose 'good' questions as well. Asking a lot of questions is one of the characteristics of the highly gifted, which can be used in the learning process. By 'thinking aloud' and with the teacher's support, the student seeks answers to his/her questions.

Self-assessment, peer assessment

Students assess their and their peers' outcomes with the help of predetermined criteria. Initially, students need the teacher's guidance to learn how to be 'critical friends'. The teacher encourages direct, but not offensive communication.

Why is FA one of the ways of encouraging highly gifted students to meet their learning goals?

- By being able to determine the content, students don't lose motivation for learning since they set the goals that present a challenge.
- By being able to show evidence of their learning continually, highly gifted students are easier to indentify.
- The planned learning goals are interesting and relevant for the student, which presents additional motivation for learning.
- FA enhances learner's autonomy and his engagement in all the stages of the learning process, which is essential for the highly gifted. They can enrich the lessons with complex tasks, presentations, results etc. By encouraging communication and collaboration, the teacher helps develop their social competences.

Source: Holcar Brunauer, A. (2017): Formativno spremljanje v podporo vsakemu učencu. Vključujoča šola – priročnik za učitelje in druge strokovne delavce, št. 2, 4-13.

Annex 2: possible differentiation reading assignment (MTG München)

- Draw a wanted poster of a character of your choice (pictures plus important information about the character - explain why you picked him/her).
- Summarize the plot / story.
- Collect key passages / special - or sentences / quotations on a page (explain why you picked them).
- Pick your favorite passage: copy and illustrate it (explain why you picked it).
- Find 2-3 objects that play an important role in your story: draw them and write 1-2 sentences about each.
- Continue the story of the book: imagine how a certain character feels, what he/she does etc. ten years later, or invent a different ending.
- Invent a dialogue: write the script.
- Express your opinion on what some characters do in certain situations: explain why you think they react / feel like this and say what you think of it.
- Write a letter to a character.
- Create a map of your story's setting and fill in important place names.
- Cast the main characters for a film version: find photos of actors / people who could play the respective roles, and add 2-3 sentences about each one explaining your choice.
- Create a photo story / comic strip of a part of the book.
- Characterize one of the main characters.
- Write an interview with the main character.
- Write an entry into the diary of one of the main characters.
- Write a book review and comment on the quality of the book.