



Kansas Effective Practices Instructional Toolkit

Implementing Research and Resources Into Action Research Lesson 1: Daily Challenges

Types of Gifted Students

Type I: Successful

As many as 90% of gifted students fall into this group. These students have learned the system and display appropriate behavior, taking their cues from parents and teachers. They learn well and score high, and rarely exhibit behavior problems. However, they are simply using the system and may become bored in school. They become dependent on parents and teachers for direction and do not develop creativity and autonomy. Although successful in school and well liked by peers, they may underachieve in college and become competent but unimaginative adults.

Type II: Challenging

These students are divergently gifted, and schools often fail to identify them as gifted. They may be highly creative, but may appear obstinate, tactless, sarcastic, and confrontational. These students feel frustrated that the school system has not recognized their talents and abilities. They are struggling with their self-esteem and may have poor relations with peers. If they do not receive intervention by junior high, they may become dropouts and/or develop “at risk” behaviors.

Type III: Underground

These students hide their giftedness. Usually they are middle school females. If gifted males go underground, it tends to happen in high school in response to peer pressure. These students deny their talents in order to feel more included with a non-gifted peer group. Students who were once highly motivated and intensely interested in academic or creative pursuits may suddenly undergo a radical transformation and lose all interest in previous passions. They frequently feel insecure and anxious. Challenging them or confronting them may only increase their alienation.

Type IV: Dropouts

These students are angry: angry with adults and with themselves because the system has not met their needs for many years and they feel rejected. They may express their anger by acting depressed or withdrawn, or by acting out and responding defensively. They may have interests that lie outside the realm of the school curriculum, and they do not receive support or affirmation for their talent and interest in these unusual areas. School seems irrelevant and hostile to them. They have low self-esteem and may require a close working relationship with an adult they can trust.

Type V: Double-Labeled (Twice Exceptional)

These are students who are also physically or emotionally handicapped, or who have learning disabilities. Most Gifted programs do not identify or serve these students. They do not often exhibit behaviors that schools look for in the gifted. They may have sloppy writing or disruptive behaviors, and often seem confused about their inability to complete school tasks, and may deny this by calling assignments “boring” or “stupid.” They show symptoms of stress and may feel discouraged, frustrated, rejected, helpless, or isolated. They are often impatient and critical and react stubbornly to criticism.

Type VI: Autonomous Learner

These are students who have learned to work effectively in the school system. In this they are like Type I students, but unlike Type I students, they do not strive to do as little as possible; instead they use the system to create new opportunities for themselves. They do not work for the system, they make the system work for them. They have strong, positive self-concepts because their needs are being met; they are successful. These students are independent and self-directed. They realize they can create change in their own lives and do not wait for others to facilitate change for them.