



## Case Scenarios - Matching Curriculum to Academic Abilities

**Curriculum**, in general, is the content that a teacher or school plans to teach. It is the “what” that students will be expected to learn at each grade level. When developing the educational plan, consider how the curriculum can be modified as supported by research:

- **Content** (Organization, complexity, abstraction, relating content to study of people, methods of inquiry used in field, making connections across disciplines)
- **Process** (Independent study/project, inquiry, learning contracts, higher order thinking, lecture, new content, one-on-one tutoring, problem-based learning, simulations, individual self pacing)
- **Product** (Transforming learning into non-traditional visual, dramatic or other forms; presenting to real audiences, solving relevant real world situations/problems)

**Instruction** refers to “how” the curriculum will be taught. When developing the education plan, consider different instructional delivery modifications supported by research:

- **Individualization** (Credit for prior learning, independent study, compacting, non-graded continuous progress classes, multi-grade classes, one-on-one mentoring/tutoring)
- **Grouping by Ability/Achievement** (Regrouping by achievement for subject instruction, cluster grouping, cross-graded classes, within-class performance grouping, partial day grouping)
- **Acceleration** (Grade skipping, early entrance to school/college, single subject acceleration, grade telescoping, concurrent enrollment, Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate, credit by exam)

**Scroll down** to the following page to view case scenarios that incorporate various strategies that match the curriculum and instruction to the student's academic abilities.

## ***Case Scenarios - Matching Curriculum to Academic Abilities***

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<b>Case Study Name</b>	<b>Suggested Strategies</b>
<a href="#"><u>Juan</u></a>	Self Pacing/Non-graded classes Grade-Skipping Concurrent Enrollment Ability grouping for Enriched Classes
<a href="#"><u>Ravi</u></a>	Early Entrance/Grade Skipping Regrouping by Achievement Level Subject Acceleration in Math/SMPY program Ability Grouping for Enrichment Subject Acceleration in Foreign Language Advanced Placement Credit by Examination
<a href="#"><u>Jana</u></a>	Flexible Pacing Individualized Learning Plan Enrichment in Problem Solving and Research
<a href="#"><u>Chantal</u></a>	Early Entrance Subject Acceleration in Reading Grade-Skipping Ability Grouping for Enrichment Peer Grouping Concurrent Enrollment Subject Acceleration in Foreign Language
<a href="#"><u>Colin</u></a>	Early Entrance/Grade Skipping Regrouping by Achievement Level Ability Grouping for Enrichment Ability Grouping for Enriched Classes Advanced Placement Concurrent Enrollment



## Juan

Juan attended a school that allowed him to move at his own pace for every academic subject from grades one to seven. He skipped eighth grade. In high school, he was placed in honors classes for math, science and social studies. During the spring semester of his senior year, he enrolled in calculus at the local college, receiving one year's college credit for his work.



### Educational Options Used with Juan

Self Pacing/Non-graded classes

Grade-Skipping

Concurrent Enrollment

Ability grouping for Enriched Classes

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## Ravi

Ravi was tested at age four, and she was found to be reading at the third-grade level with an accompanying high IQ. She was placed in first grade at age 4 ½ years. From grades one through five, she was grouped with other highly able students in her grade level for advanced instruction in reading and mathematics. In grade seven, she took the Scholastic aptitude Test (normally given to high school students), achieved a high score, and was invited to participate in an accelerated mathematics program at the local college, where she received two years' high school credit for each year of program participation. In high school, she took advanced or accelerated classes in English, mathematics, science, and social studies. She was allowed to work at her own pace in German, receiving three years' credit in one year's time. In her senior year, she took the Advanced placement (AP) courses offered at her school in English literature and calculus, scoring 5's on both AP exams. When Ravi entered college she was given 10 credits of mathematics and six credits of English for her high AP test scores. She took additional placement tests at the university, receiving another 23 credits in foreign language and music theory.



### Educational Options Used with Ravi

Early Entrance/Grade Skipping

Regrouping by Achievement Level

Credit by Examination

Ability Grouping for Enrichment

Subject Acceleration in Foreign Language

Advanced Placement

Subject Acceleration in Math/SMPY program

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## **Jana**

Jana attended an “elementary school of tomorrow” that was intent on ensuring that every child could learn. Jana had her own computer and her own individualized learning plan of activities to practice in basic skills areas, such as mathematics, language, and reading. She was encouraged to schedule her time to work on her ILP every day, although, as one of 60 students her “Master Teacher” was responsible for, she was not regularly supervised as to whether this was occurring. The teacher assumed that she was self-directed and responsible enough to do this on her own. Once every trimester, Jana signed up for general enrichment units in reading, science, and social studies (three per day), as did every other student in the school. These units often coordinated with other community facilities, such as museums, business experts, businesses, etc., to provide “real world” experiences for the student involved. Children were divided into mixed-ability learning teams in these units. No textbooks were used in any instruction, assignments were cooperatively completed and submitted, and no independent homework assignments were required of any student. Most of the instruction, whether computer-aided or in the “real world” enrichment experiences, focused on problem-solving strategies and developing research skills. Jana (and every other student in the school) was tested using an achievement test battery at the beginning and at the end of each of her three years in this new school.



### **Educational Options Used with Jana**

Flexible Pacing  
Individualized Learning Plan

Enrichment in  
Problem Solving and Research

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## **Chantal**

Chantal was almost five years old when she entered kindergarten. From first grade on, she read independently apart from the class and completed the 1-8 basal reading series by grade four. She skipped fifth grade. In grades seven and eight, she was grouped with eight other bright students for enriched classes in typing, foreign language, and creative dramatics. In high school, she was placed in the “accelerated classes” for math, science, social studies and English. She was allowed to work at her own pace in foreign language and was able to complete four years of high school Latin in two years, and three years of German in one year. During the spring semester of her senior year, she enrolled in two history classes at the local college in the afternoons for credit.



### **Educational Options Used with Chantal**

Early Entrance

Subject Acceleration  
in Reading

Grade-Skipping

Ability Grouping for  
Enrichment

Peer Grouping

Concurrent Enrollment

Subject Acceleration  
in Foreign Language

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## **Colin**

Colin entered school at the “appropriate” chronological age, even though he was already reading and thinking at advanced levels. In elementary school, he was grouped with other highly able students for enriched instruction in reading and math. In grades three through five, he was also removed from his regular class along with other bright students to participate in interdisciplinary enrichment units in the sciences and humanities. In middle school, he was placed in “advanced” sections of math, social studies, science, and English, and he continued with advanced sections in mathematics and English throughout high school as well. In some academic subjects, particularly social studies and science classes at the high school level, Colin was in heterogeneous classrooms, where he learned primarily through mixed ability cooperative groups. He and his fellow group members would divide the work on a task they shared, such as answering textbook questions or writing up a lab report. He took AP courses and exams in American history and English literature, and he received six credits, three for each course, in these subjects when he enrolled in college. In his senior year of high school, Colin took a college course on rhetoric offered at his school in the morning before classes began, and he received five credits for it when he was admitted to college. He entered college with a total of 11 college credits.



### **Educational Options Used with Colin**

Early Entrance/Grade  
Skipping

Regrouping by  
Achievement Level

Ability Grouping for Enrichment

Ability Grouping for  
Enriched Classes

Advanced Placement

Concurrent Enrollment

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