Literature
And The Gifted

Literature... is our reservoir of insight into the human condition, the pool of perceptions and conceptions from which we draw our own visions of what it is to be human.
—ROBERT E. PROBST

If we accept this definition of literature, then we can readily see the importance of connecting the gifted reader with appropriate literature. A quick review of the various lists of characteristics of gifted students is enough to remind us of their qualities which make them more sensitive to the world, to their own feelings, and to the feelings of others. It may well be that literature provides the only guide that many gifted students have to “distill, expand, deepen, recall, and relate to social, biological, and cultural history” (Dr. Karen Harris, Interview which follows). Because many of our gifted learners are avid readers, we must be informed on how to guide them in their reading. We must learn to ask the right questions, such as: What is appropriate reading for the gifted? Why do we need to guide our gifted readers? What are important characteristics of literature for the gifted reader? and What should we be looking for?

In finding answers to these questions, we have turned to authorities both national and local. This issue of tempo addresses our concern in matching the gifted reader with the appropriate literature. Our lead article is the result of a recent interview with Dr. Karen Harris by Dr. Mary Seay. Dr. Harris’ book, Books for the Gifted Child (written with Dr. Barbara Baskin), is an important resource in guiding our gifted readers.
The Three R's of Summer

LIKE MOST EDUCATORS, and I suppose all students, I very much look forward to the summer months. Schedules are not quite as inflexible as those of the school year and time spent with family and friends takes precedence over budgets and deadlines. I also take the time to replace the traditional 3 R's with my 3 R's of summer. I share them with you in the hope that you will find time this summer to Rest, Reflect, and Regroup.

Rest
For me, summer offers a time to refuel and relax whether by catching up on reading, attending an opera, cheering for a favorite team, or simply by doing nothing. Rest becomes a priority and not simply a luxury. As adults who serve as role models for the children we love, I believe it is incumbent on us to help them learn the importance of rest in keeping both a sound mind and a sound body.

Reflect
During the school year, I seldom seem to have time to think about anything but survival from one hectic day to the next. Summer offers a time to slow down and think about the goals we have set for ourselves, which ones we have met, and which ones still need work. With the slower pace of summer, it is possible to celebrate all the accomplishments of the past school year. In fact, reflecting over this first year of mandated programs for the gifted, I celebrate the number of educators who are receiving specialized training in the education of the gifted. Likewise, I also take the time to replace the traditions of the school year and deadlines. I find the time to reflect, and regroup.

Regroup
Summer allows us the time we need to rethink priorities. With rest and reflection, we are able to reexamine what actually is important during times of stress. I personally find that I can face a new school year with freshness of heart and spirit when I have regrouped, established new priorities, and reestablished the importance of past priorities. As important as the basic 3 R's are to those of us who love and work with children, the 3 R's of summer may be equally as important. My wish for you this summer is to find the time to rest, reflect, and regroup; and then to face another school year of challenge and opportunities with renewed energy and enthusiasm.
State Board of Education Adopts G/T Rules

On May 11, 1991, the State Board of Education approved for final adoption the rules for implementing HB1050. Enacted as law in 1987, this bill mandated that “each Texas school district shall adopt a process for identifying gifted and talented students in the school district’s population and, not later than the 1990-1991 school year, shall establish a program for those students in each grade level.” (Section 21.652, Texas Education Code)

The recently adopted SBOE rules for gifted and talented are the compliance regulations that school districts should follow in the implementation of HB1050. [SBOE rules for g/t, approved May 11, 1991, are quoted on page 23.]

72nd Session of Texas Legislature

SB351, the school finance reform bill authored by Senator Carl Parker of Port Arthur, was the most important piece of educational legislation to come out of the 72nd Session. This bill consolidates the tax bases of the 1,058 Texas school districts into 188 county education districts (CEDs) which roughly follow county lines. The combined tax revenues from the 188 consolidated tax districts are to be distributed to component school districts within the larger tax areas. As SB351 was written, the state’s poorer school districts were projected to receive $1.5 million of new money from the funding formula changes in the way that state aid will be distributed... but that was as things stood in May, at the close of the regular session.

On June 21 the Austin American Statesman reported that “the House Appropriations Committee... voted 11-8 to cut $1 billion from the school bill for the next two years.” If this should occur, state spending for schools would increase less than one-tenth of what was promised in SB351.

At least two reform measures are included in SB351 that should interest parents and educators of gifted and talented students:

1. The addition of five instructional days to the current 175-day school year. (This provision limits the time districts now provide faculty and staff for planning and professional development programs. It could also imperil the SBOE rule requiring districts to provide a minimum of thirty hours of staff development for teachers of the gifted prior to assignment in the program for gifted students.)

2. The authority given to the commissioner of education to waive rules and regulations for school districts. (Depending on the criteria established for granting waivers, this measure could pose some uncertainty about the implementation of the g/t rules recently adopted by the State Board.)

Governor Richards Calls Special Session

On July 15, 1991, Governor Ann Richards called Texas legislators back to Austin to write the 1992-1993 state budget. One of their most challenging tasks will be to determine the resources needed for funding the school finance bill. According to Lieutenant Governor Bob Bullock “an absolute minimum of $1.4 billion is needed to fund the school finance equalization bill required by the Texas Supreme Court ruling.”

In the early part of July State Comptroller John Sharp released a performance audit report of state government agency spending and identified areas where budget cuts could be made. Government agency reorganization to reduce duplication of services is a major item on the Comptroller’s list of cost-saving measures. Suggested budget cuts, coupled with income-producing measures proposed by the Governor’s Task Force on Revenue, could produce some of the needed dollars for the school finance bill and other state supported programs.

The good news for g/t at this time, although information for this column has been altered daily to reflect the latest news about the state budget, is that neither SB351 nor Comptroller Sharp’s report would alter the current allotment for funding of programs for gifted and talented.

TAGT will continue to monitor the legislative budget process through the summer (and some say fall!). Your help with your legislator during the Special Session will be most beneficial for continued state funding of educational programs for gifted and talented students.
Guiding Our Gifted Readers

One of the greatest joys in working with gifted students is sharing their enthusiasm for reading. Many, if not most, gifted students are highly motivated readers. Indeed, it is often this joy of reading that becomes the coping factor in their lives. Through their reading, our gifted students learn to deal with a world that is not equipped to deal with gifted persons. By their self-directed reading, gifted students extend their own knowledge bases, enhance their own skills, and even specialize their capabilities in areas of advanced learning. However, gifted students, like other students, require guidance in their learning. The area of reading is no exception. It is our responsibility to guide our gifted students into a positive reading experience. Where, then, do we go for guidance in appropriately assisting our gifted students? This issue of tempo addresses this important concern of parents and teachers.

One of the most important resources that I have used in guiding my gifted readers is Books for the Gifted Child: A Selected Guide to Intellectually Demanding Books by Dr. Barbara H. Baskin and Dr. Karen Harris. Dr. Mary Seay has provided us with an article that reflects upon this work in light of her conversations with Dr. Harris. Chapter Four of Books for the Gifted Child is especially helpful. This chapter provides a list of books with rather detailed annotations.

The reading/writing workshop has proven to be especially effective with gifted students, but in our enthusiasm for this approach, we may have overlooked an important element: reading just for fun! Dr. Kylene Beers, University of Houston, not only gives us a warning based on a recent classroom experience with gifted learners, but she also provides three concrete classroom suggestions to help you help your students to enjoy free reading. I think that you will find her reference list especially helpful.

“A Baker’s Dozen: Thirteen Treats for the Gifted Reader” by Dr. Teri Lesesne, Sam Houston State University, provides you with an annotated list of thirteen new children and young adult works that are especially appropriate for the exceptional reader. The works cited provide a variety of reading in poetry, fiction, history, and biography. In addition, Dr. Lesesne has suggested follow-up activities for each of the works cited. Her article also reminds us of three important sources that we should use in finding appropriate literature for our gifted readers: School Library Journal, Booklist, and The Horn Book. (Dr. Beers and Dr. Lesesne both hold the Masters in Gifted Education; they were classmates in the first class to receive this degree at the University of Houston.)

We haven’t overlooked our Texas authors in this issue either. If you don’t know the Hank the Cowdog series by John Erickson, run—don’t walk to the nearest bookstore. Hank and his friends provide a wonderful, warm, and humorous picture of Texas ranch life. Patricia A. Leadbeater, who has worked with John, provides some practical classroom lessons and activities based on this series.

Other classroom tactics using literature are provided by TAGT members and teachers Betty Harrison and Mary McCrary Sullivan. They share some of their classroom strategies in using literature in the classroom. It is important to remember that literature is a valuable resource in addressing various concerns and issues. For example, leadership is one area of giftedness that we often neglect. The Harrison article provides some hints on how we can address leadership in the classroom.

Books can have a profound effect on the reader and on his or her life. Most of our gifted students are avid readers, and adults who live and work with these students can use books to guide them in their acquisition of knowledge, their social and emotional development, their view of the world, and their understanding of themselves and their giftedness. Books and reading are powerful tools which do influence students; therefore, we must consider the great potential of this resource and prepare ourselves in effectively guiding our gifted readers. Through the use of literature we can help our gifted learners to be all they can be.
As one of the best known authorities on books, and especially on books for the gifted, Karen Harris was the obvious choice to interview on the problems associated with gifted adolescents, books, and choices. She is the Chairman of the Department of Library Science at the University of New Orleans and also teaches courses related to gifted education. Her advocacy for the gifted, her charm, and her delightful quick wit made conversation with her a rewarding experience. She is one of those especially gifted people who elicit from an ordinary person a gifted response.

THROUGH BOOKS, GIFTED ADOLESCENT READERS CAN GAIN A FIRM AWARENESS OF THE INTERRELATIONSHIPS AMONG THE BRANCHES OF WHAT IS KNOWN, THE INEXTRICABLE LINKS AMONG POETRY, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, HISTORY, AND MYTHOLOGY.

SEAY: We are aware that a student's world is inevitably limited in the number, variety, and quality of experiences that she or he can directly participate in. We know that books offer a way to expand knowledge through vicarious experience. As long as they're reading, is the type of book that the gifted read as important as the fact that they are reading?

HARRIS: Very definitely. Beginning with the very young child, picture books often provide the initial contact with concepts of number, size, color, spatial relationships, time, weather, and much more. This introduction can be purely expository or can encourage children to identify, discriminate, deduce, and analyze. As the child matures, it is even more crucial that a pattern of active participation in comprehending concepts be established early so that both the responsibility and the pleasures of learning will reside where they belong—with the student.

Concept books provide the means for the ordering of experiences. They show not only specific relationships, but, even more critically, how the process of organizing takes place. Here convergent thinking can be readily promoted. Even at a fundamental level, books shape observational skills; organize information according to some pattern; provide the stimuli for attempts at independent decoding; facilitate acquisition of knowledge; interpret and in other ways communicate information about what one cannot see as well as what one can; and categorize, generalize, and reveal data that excite and stimulate the imagination.

SEAY: Do gifted readers tend to enjoy the same kinds of books? Are they such voracious and curious readers that they will read almost anything?

HARRIS: Any single book suitable for gifted readers may be unequivocally rejected by a particular young person. Factors such as prior knowledge, timing, maturity, stylistic preferences, and above all, interest, will influence receptivity. Matching the right book to the individual student can never be an automatic process since a myriad of circumstances foster or impede the communication that takes place between author and reader.

That old expression about the value of computer data, "garbage in—garbage out," might be relevant here. Since many parents of gifted children describe them as reading machines, concern about what goes in is quite in order. In the interest of ingestion of great quantities of books, for example, awards for numbers of titles accumulated in summer reading clubs place little emphasis on the quality of what is read. Reading, then, seems to be something to be gotten through rather than an experience to savor, prolong, consider, and reconsider at length, discuss,

(See SEAY, p. 14)
Reading isn’t just

Kylene Beers
University of Houston

I recently visited a 4th and 5th grade classroom of gifted students. The teacher left me alone with the students to talk about their gifted program. Eventually, I asked them to talk to me about reading. Did they like it? Did they read often? What did reading mean to them? I expected their answers to mirror the answers I had received in the past when talking with gifted children. I expected to hear that reading is fun, that they LOVE to read, that they read all the time, that they read more than one book at a time, and so on and so on. I expected them to do what other students had done: to talk about specific books that they were favorites, about characters that they had identified with, about places the books had taken them. I expected to know their replies; I was shocked to find that I didn’t.


Tim’s comment must have made sense to the other students, for several began to share similar sentiments: “You know, I love to read, but now that I’m in this gifted class, we never get to do any fun reading. We’re always doing projects and stuff.” “Yeah, we read all the time, but it’s always for a report, or a discussion, or for our reading log.” “I liked it better before I was gifted. Then, we had time to read just for fun. Now, it’s like what Tim said, when I read I always have to write something about what I was reading. The only time I get to just read is at home and by the time I finish all my homework, that’s not a lot of time.”

Their comments continued, and as they did, I heard a real frustration at the lack of time they were given at school for recreational reading. One student summed it up best: “I’d rather not be in the gifted class. My friends in the regular class, they get free reading time a lot, and their teacher reads to them every day. We only get free reading time when we’ve finished a project.” I was, of course, concerned about their comments, and later visited with the teacher asking her how much time was devoted to recreational reading:

“No much. We’ve got to cover the basic material and then move on into the extension curriculum. These children are capable of so much and they really enjoy learning. They complete six major projects a year [one per six weeks] and do several mini-projects as well. Each project requires an extensive amount of library research, so they do a lot of reading with that. …Now they do do several book reports, and whenever they read on their own they are expected to log it in their book logs. Also, we study six classroom novels. So they do quite a bit of reading.”

Indeed. These students were doing quite a bit of reading, but most of it was what I’ll call academic reading, reading to fulfill an academic requirement. Even though the teacher mentioned that fostering a love of recreational reading was a main goal of hers, her daily plans left little time for this activity. Other studies indicate a similar paradox.

In a survey of parent, principal, and teacher attitudes toward the development of voluntary reading at school, Morrow (1983, 1984) found that the promotion of voluntary reading ranked last when rated against other reading skills, such as study skills or comprehension. Teachers in the study reported that the school day had little or no time for the development of recreational readers; instead, the time was allocated to reading skill development.

Additionally, in a survey of 101 elementary grade teachers, Heathington and Alexander (1984) found that teachers spent little time trying to foster good attitudes toward reading. While the majority of the teachers stated that encouraging a positive attitude for reading was important, in practice the majority of their time was spent on comprehension, phonics, oral reading, and silent reading skills. However, this might be because when asked how to promote a positive attitude toward reading, teachers most frequently responded that the best method was to develop children’s reading skills.

Finally, in A Place Called School (1984), Goodlad reports that only six percent of an elementary school
for writing

day is spent reading. That number drops to less than three percent in junior high and less than two percent in high school.

Reports such as these are disconcerting for several reasons. First, there is a strong correlation between an adolescent's interest in reading and his or her later adult interest in reading (Himmelweit and Swift, 1979). If schools are creating a disinterest for reading either because it is given little time or because of the reading-means-writing syndrome, then we may be creating a lasting negative impression. Second, Smith (1971) explains that readers become fluent readers as a result of sustained practice with print. If teachers don't offer time for sustained silent reading, then fluency diminishes. This results in less enjoyment as reading becomes a chore.

Nancy Atwell (1987) suggests that teachers inadvertently give students negative messages about reading. She explains that our teaching practices have, among other things, convinced students that “reading requires memorization and mastery of information, terms, conventions, and theories” and is followed by “writing to test reading—book reports, critical papers, essays…” And as Tim explained to me, reading that means writing is no fun at all.

No teacher intends to create a distaste for reading. The reasons they offer for not providing more time for recreational reading are valid: the need to complete mandated testing, to prepare students for standardized testing, to get students ready for the next grade, to finish the curriculum. In a study of middle school avid readers (Boers, 1988) the teachers of gifted students talked specifically about the pressures they felt to meet curricular demands and parent expectations. One teacher explained why she provided only 16 minutes per week for recreational reading:

“I'd like to give them more time to read on their own. However, the state has mandated certain essential elements that must be covered and on top of that, the district has created a gifted curriculum that we also must cover. There's not enough time in the week to do all the required work plus have free reading.”

Another teacher echoed the same sentiments but then added an additional reason. Smith calls this aversion to reading “one of the great tragedies of contemporary education….”

Often teachers of the gifted presume, even expect, that their students are avid readers. The thought that they would develop an antipathy toward reading and become a part of Smith's (1988) great tragedy seems absurd. However, Smith calls this aversion to reading “one of the great tragedies of contemporary education….”

Steps for keeping voluntary reading alive in your classroom:

1. Decide how much time in a week you can let the students enjoy free reading. Then discuss with the students how much time they have and let them help you decide how that time should be allocated. Some students, especially older ones, may vote that they want their time all on one day, or perhaps divided equally among two days. Younger students may choose to read every day for a shorter period of time. Let the class vote or try different arrangements throughout the year.

2. Set up a book-chat corner where students sit and talk about their books with friends. No grades, no reports, no logs, just talk. This helps them become a part of a community of readers where they exchange ideas, talk about responses, and explore feelings.

3. Offer a new-genre list. Often, gifted students become very absorbed in one author or one type of book. As a result, they miss other genres and authors we would like them to meet. You can help them vary their reading by posting, and then periodically changing, a list of books that highlight a particular genre. You might include a science-fiction list, a poetry list, an historical fiction list, and a nonfiction list.

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Son: “I don't see a need to give them a lot of time to read. They already can read and enjoy reading. Now they need to be using their reading skills.”

Two beliefs appear to be developing: first, that gifted students already like to read so they don't need much encouragement in this area and second, since they are gifted, all their reading needs to be tied to some sort of project. The ramifications of both beliefs are serious. Students who are not encouraged to keep reading, or who continually must tie their reading to a report or a project, may develop an aversion to reading. After listening to the 4th and 5th graders I visited, I'm convinced that in some cases, gifted students are getting the message that reading isn't for pleasure, but instead is for work. Gifted students, like all students, need a time to enjoy reading for reading's sake. Giftedness does not automatically ensure a love of reading. As with other students, teachers of the gifted need to encourage recreational reading by providing time for it.

In this time of accountability, it is easy to become caught up in gifted programs, independent projects, and higher level thinking exercises. In doing so, reading...
A Baker’s Dozen: Treats

Teri S. Lesesne
Sam Houston State University

Reading is an activity typically preferred by the gifted student. Books offer unique opportunities for gifted students to direct their own learning experiences, to individualize instruction. Finding appropriate reading material for these students, however, is often a challenge for teachers. Gifted readers have specific needs in both the cognitive (intellectual) and affective (emotional) domains. Books which meet the challenge in both domains, then, are those which stimulate thinking at the same time they encourage personal response. This annotated booklist provides thirteen titles from 1990 which are eminently suitable for exceptional readers. They tap into both the intellect and the emotions of readers.

Additionally, books for gifted readers should possess language, structure, and content which are unique and complex. These thirteen books provide rich language experiences, non-linear structures, and a wide variety of content. In addition, each has been recognized in 1990 as making a significant contribution to literature by reviewing sources including School Library Journal Booklist and The Horn Book. Following each annotation are suggested readings and activities which might serve as follow-up to the reading. As with any list, teachers will want to adapt these materials and suggestions for use in their classrooms and with their own students.

A young girl traveling alone in 1832 was a rarity. As Charlotte Doyle travels from England to America, she becomes involved in a mutinous plot to overthrow the captain of the ship. Later, she finds herself accused of murdering this villainous captain. This historical adventure rivets readers’ attention from its terse beginning to its almost ironic ending.

Follow up
Students may wish to read other Avi works set in the past such as The Man Who Was Poe. Research into sailing vessels of the era or the treatment of women in the early 1800s is also a possibility. Students could consult the Rappaport work cited later in this article for information about the treatment of women in the 19th century. Writing Charlotte’s story from the perspective of another character in the novel may prove challenging for students.

Just the phrase “heart attack” proves frightening to a ten-year-old boy. He is willing to try anything to save his beloved grandfather’s life. When the nurse’s son, Dooley, suggests a “soul switch,” the boy enters a world of superstition and lore in which he discovers the wondrous healing power of love. As with all of Brooks’ prior works, this is a beautifully written novel whose images and language are spellbinding.

Follow up
Cormier’s Other Bells for Us to Ring is a natural tie-in to this book as each novel deals with growing up and the sacrifices involved in maintaining relationships with those we love. Students may wish to investigate the folklore Dooley presents in the story. Another possible activity might involve an analysis of the imagery and symbolism used by Brooks in the novel.

This picture-story book recounts the story of a young boy’s visit to the Vietnam Memorial with his father. As they search for his grandfather’s name, the boy encounters a Vietnam vet, a troop of school girls, and a young boy with his grandfather. In simple yet powerful language, Bunting conveys the emotional force of a visit to this wall.

Follow up
As part of a thematic unit on Vietnam or war in general, this book provides the opportunity for students to discuss the impact war has on individuals. Therefore, it might be used as a beginning point in a discussion of conflict and its consequences. Students may want to read other children’s books about various wars such as Innocenti’s Rose Blanche or Lowry’s Number the Stars (World War II) or I Ain’t Gonna Study War No More: The Story of America’s Peace Seekers by Milton Meltzer.

This contemporary version of Little Red Riding Hood features a mouse named Ruby, her grandmother who lives atop Beacon Hill, her grandmother’s friend Mrs. Mastiff, and a sneaky stranger. On her way to grandmother’s house with tripe cheese pies, Ruby encounters a grumpy reptile whose breath smells of dirty gym socks. She is rescued from this situation by a stranger who inquires as to her destination. Never fear! Ruby is a very intelligent mouse who warns her grandmother’s friend of the impending danger. This
for the Gifted Reader

tongue-in-cheek retelling of a classic folk tale is sure to delight with its subtle and not-so-subtle humor.

FOLLOW UP
A natural activity is to compare this version to the classic telling or other versions of Little Red Riding Hood. Roald Dahl's rhymed version in Revolting Rhymes offers another humorous twist on the familiar story as well. There are many contemporary versions of this and other traditional tales which students can compare and contrast easily.

A Saturnalia was a traditional Roman feast in which master and slave traded places for a day. In the Boston of 1681, some families still adhered to this custom despite the disfavor it found with the church. The main character in this story is a fourteen-year-old Indian boy named William, a Narragansett captured at the end of the Indian war, who is serving as an apprentice to a printer. He is besieged by the local tithingman who sees him as a savage pagan like those responsible for the deaths of his grandsons. He makes every attempt to portray William as an untamed child who would like nothing better than to slit the throat of his master. Nothing could be further from the truth. This young man is an intelligent student who is treated with respect by his master and the master's family. He is haunted, however, by his Indian heritage and the memories of the brutal attack his tribe suffered at the hands of the white men in the community in which he now lives.

FOLLOW UP
This novel would make an excellent addition to the history text's account of Indian-settler relationships in early America. With the popularity of the movie *Dances with Wolves*, it would also serve as a tie-in to a unit on Native Americans and their treatment. Other Fleischman novels deal with similar time periods such as *Coming and Going Men* and *Groven Images* and would be good recommendations for further reading.

This collection of one-act plays is intended for classroom use. Each play may be staged with a minimum of costume, set, props, etc. The plays, additionally, are written by popular young adult authors such as Walter Dean Myers and Susan Beth Pfeffer. From picking up girls in aerobics class to futuristic drama to failing the driving exam, these plays deal with topics of interest to adolescents. Do not relegate this book to the drama classroom but include it in the study of plays as literature. These plays are appropriate for individual reading as well as for performance.

FOLLOW UP
The logical follow up is to have students produce one or more of the plays for the class. They may be videotaped or performed live. Once students have read several plays, they may wish to try their hand at writing one.

Mary James is a pseudonym for M. E. Kerr and this book is Kerr fare: lots of satirical humor used to convey important messages to readers. This is the story of Shoebag, a roach who awakens one morning to find his dream of being a human has come true. He appears in the closet of the Biddle family who quickly adopt him. The Biddle's seven-year-old daughter Eunice, better known as Pretty Soft, is the star of a bathroom tissue TV commercial. Shoebag, now called Stuart Bagg, enrolls in school and begins leading a normal life. He soon learns, however, for his old home; he misses his roach family and their late night raids in the Biddle kitchen. Even though a return to his roach life may mean encounters with spiders and deadly insecticides, Stuart wants to be Shoebag again.

FOLLOW UP
Shoebag would be an excellent way to introduce readers to Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. It also serves as a wonderful example of how point of view can change a story. Students may write one of the incidents in the story from the point of view of one of the Biddles. They could also continue the narrative by picking up the story of Gregor Samsa, another roach in human form.

This anthology of poetry presents the work of various contemporary poets on topics as disparate as skateboarding and computers, all topics which should appeal to the adolescent reader. Following many of the poems are comments by and a picture of the poet. Students gain tremendous insight into the creative processes of the poets as they discuss their craft, the inspiration for particular poems, or where they get their ideas. As in the case of all Janeczko's work, this collection provides some insight into the writing processes of various poets. It serves to illustrate also that poets come in many shapes, sizes, and varieties.

FOLLOW UP
This anthology makes poetry come alive for students who may wish to read other of Janeczko's works such as *Petspeak* and *Pocket Poems*. Students may put together their own collections based on the format of the Janeczko book. Various poems may be utilized as models for student compositions.

An alphabet book and so much more, *Aardvarks, Disembark!* is the latest book from graphic artist Jonas whose previous works have delighted youngers with their unusual format. This book recounts the tale of Noah who, after the flood waters have receded, dismisses...
Literature For The Gifted: Choice And Celebration

Ann McCrary Sullivan
Former Teacher of the Gifted, Robert E. Lee High School, Goose Creek ISD

LITERATURE FOR THE GIFTED IS, OR should be, quite simply whatever they want to read. It's not our job, or it shouldn't be, to control what they read. What our students need from us is to learn how to want to read. It's not our job, or it shouldn't be, to control what they read. What our students need from us is to learn how to see the patterns that arise from their choices and insights.

In our efforts to do this, it is important that we not use literature to teach resentment of writing. If an expository writing assignment looms at the end of every work of literature, writing becomes punishment and the motivation to read (or, at least, to read what one is "supposed" to read) is diminished. James Moffett, in Coming on Center, advises:

Using literary critical writing as a way of testing literature does a disservice to both literature and composition. Essays on literature should come only after much experience with...other activities...and should be done only occasionally, not routinely.

He laments, and I lament with him, that "...vivisections and postmortems on texts...have turned so many youngsters against the study of literature."

We need a wide-ranging repertory of possible responses to literature, non-verbal as well as verbal. Some of my most memorable classroom moments, and—judging by their comments when I cross paths with them years later—some of my students' most memorable moments, have arisen from assignments that permitted responses to literature that were not writing.

I will never forget the vitality and pathos that David captured in "Penelope," his composition for the cello. It was a response to his reading of The Odyssey. His performance of the piece and his talk about the process of composing it clearly demonstrated that he had made meaning of his reading. He had also made art.

Nor will I forget Stacy, draped in a lacy shawl, delivering (without notes) her dramatic monologue in the persona of Agatha Christie. This was her response to a biography of the mystery writer she admired. Clearly, she had engaged with that text, empathized with its subject, distilled its essence. All of us benefited from her experience.

When I think back and try to recapture the most memorable written responses to literature in my classroom, I remember poems, stories, dramatic scripts, children's books, journal entries, personal essays, prefaces to personal anthologies. I can't remember a single expository essay—a specific one, I mean, that was a real piece of communication, that made me feel enriched, and that stands out in memory overtime. (Yes, I did assign expository essays. Sometimes. I still do. Occasionally.)

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This world is full of more worthwhile literature than any one individual, no matter how gifted, can ever hope to read. Choices must be made. The question "Who will choose?" is a significant one. According to tradition, in the early years of my experience I made most of the decisions about what my students would read. Increasingly over time, I have learned from my students how better to facilitate their pleasure in reading and their appreciation of literature. I have listened to their pleas for choice, allowed them to read what they will, usually offering choice within very broad guidelines. I have also learned to offer many options for responding, options that generate full engagement with a text, the making of meaning, and the sharing of literary experience.

Moffett says it well: "...literature is not written so much for cerebration as for celebration." It's time now, in our classrooms for the gifted, to celebrate.

Reference
Leadership Through Literature

Betty Harrison
Jack Hays High School, Hays CISD, Buda

In eleven years of teaching English in a gifted and talented program, I have developed many curriculum units. One of the units that has been especially successful with gifted and talented tenth graders focuses on leadership. The unit is fun to teach because it encompasses a diversity of literary works and offers unlimited options for students' responses to the works. Additionally, it allows the students opportunities to develop skills in literary analysis as well as in determining and evaluating leadership styles.

The first work in this unit is one traditionally taught in tenth grade, Julius Caesar. After reading this classic, students discuss leaders whose power is weakened by egotism (Caesar) as well as leaders whose idealism contributes to their defeat (Brutus). They also see that problems of leadership in the twentieth century are not unlike those a sixteenth century Shakespeare presumed existed in ancient Rome.

Moving from the Roman battlefields to an unidentified tropical island, students next read William Golding's Lord of the Flies. As the boys on the island begin to evolve their own governmental structure, two conflicting leadership styles emerge: the rational, democratic Ralph versus the autocratic, violent Jack. Looking back to Julius Caesar, students may wonder if an idealistic leader is always doomed to failure.

The third work in the unit changes the political environment from one of absence of government to one of total government: 1984 by George Orwell. While there are definite parallels in the absolute rulers (Caesar, Jack, and Big Brother), this novel shifts the focus on leadership from one of position to one of the individual faced with an absence of freedom.

The final work in the unit moves from the bleak world of a 1984 Oceania to the rolling hills of England, from the Party members and the proles to rabbits that talk. Richard Adams' allegorical Watership Down provides opportunities to look at leadership in the abstract. The kind and just Hazel contrasts with the domineering General Woundwort. Adjunct characters enhance the ability of others to lead (Flyer, the visionary; Blackberry, the problem solver; Bigwig, the strong arm) just as Cassius did in Julius Caesar and Simon and Piggy did in Lord of the Flies.

In the years I have been involved in developing curriculum for gifted and talented students, there has been a concern for including leadership training as a component of the program. Because of the variety of responses available for students—discussion, creative or expository writing, visual artistic expression, to name a few—literature provides an excellent catalyst for learning about leadership.

If I Had A Wish

Who are these with ragged clothes? Tattered and torn, no elegance shows. Who are these pushing shopping carts? Slow and plodding with heavy hearts.

Ashamed, fearful, despaired, these are the Homeless. Their only address a cardboard shack, Style and luxury they certainly lack. Cringing close against the cold, Huddled like sheep in their pitiful fold.

Shelter I would grant them if I had a Wish. Hunger and misery their constant curse, Human existence could be no worse. Diluted coffee, a can of beans, For the forgotten, this nourishment means.

Food I would grant them, if I had a Wish. Shame is written on their faces, Of happier days gone are the traces. Anguished and sad their cry is heard, As the world walks by with nary a word.

Respect I would grant them, if I had a Wish. Bereft of shelter, food and respect, Such a condition must I accept? The forsaken faces I can not ignore, Their affliction begs that I do more.

The torment erased, if I had a Wish.

Brooke Robertson
7th grade, Creekwood Middle School
Humble ISD, Kingwood
Every Doggie Should

Patricia A. Leadbeater
Engine-Uity, Ltd., Phoenix, AZ

LITERATURE-BASED READING IS A TEACHING strategy which uses novels written for children as the fundamental reading program. The emphasis in grades four through eight, unlike the primary grades, should not be on word attack skills. Rather, the emphasis should be placed on understanding the elements of a novel to enhance the enjoyment of reading.

When I was a child, there were few novels written just for us. Instead, we wound up reading what was in reality adult fiction: Tom Sawyer, Heidi, Treasure Island. Not so anymore. There are a number of authors who write almost exclusively for children, incorporating nearly all of the techniques, strategies, and styles of "adult" authors. These include Konigsburg, Paterson, Mowat, Byars, Blume, Cleary—the list goes on and on. We need to bring these authors' works into perspective for our students—to teach the fundamentals of good literature, the nuances of style and techniques, the development of character and plot, the imagery of settings, and the evolution of situational literature.

Bringing Literature Into The Classroom: A Five Step Approach

1. Select the literary terminology you will teach. By the time your students graduate from the eighth grade, they should be familiar with nearly all the literary concepts and terminology in classic literature, learned not from The Iliad and The Scarlet Letter, but from children's and young adult literature such as Johnny Tremain and Harriet the Spy.

2. Choose an infrastructure to deliver the concepts. You will need to deliver these concepts, terms, and novels in some coherent format that is relatively easy to use and that has consistency. Bloom's Taxonomy is a good choice for this for the following reasons:

   • It is a simple, straightforward, systematized, cohesive theory.
   • It is easy to incorporate into a step-by-step strategy.
   • It is familiar to most teachers.
   • It covers a range of thinking skills, including higher level skills.
   • It can be taught to the students quickly and efficiently.

3. Identify the books you will use. This step is the most enjoyable. A word of warning, however: you will have to kiss a lot of frogs before you find the princes you want to use. There are so many wonderful pieces of children's literature from which to choose that you may find that you are overwhelmed. Better than the alternative! If you need help in selecting appropriate novels, talk to the children's librarian at your school or public library.

4. Write the lesson plans. There are five elements in the unit to include as you construct your lesson plans:

   1. the concepts you want the students to know
   2. the literary terms you plan to use
   3. the reading list from which they are to choose
   4. the details of what you are going to teach
   5. the items you will use for evaluation

5. Design a classroom management system which will be functional but life-sustaining for yourself. You may do one of two possible patterns. Treat your class as one reading group, in which all students meet together to discuss what they have read and to complete the same assignments. Or, divide your class into several different groups (four do nicely) based on ability so that the assignments can be differentiated. The reading group(s) meet once a week, or twice, if they need extra help with the tasks. The rest of the reading time is spent reading the novels and working at the Porta-Centers.

Using "Hank The Cowdog"

In developing the following unit, I've chosen the Hank the Cowdog series by John Erickson for several reasons:

1. The characters are well-drawn, three dimensional, with recognizable personality traits.

2. The technique of personification is used to its quintessential. Although the dog Hank is personified, he retains many dog-like characteristics and he is recognizable first as a dog, then as a rational, thinking critter with ideas, motivations, and feelings.

3. Hank is "Every Man," taking seriously his self-appointed task of Ranch Security—he defends his actions, is self-important, frequently fails in his "appointed rounds," wins often enough to receive encouragement for his attitude, makes mistakes, tries to be the "perfect" example, feels he is taken for granted by the human characters on the ranch, has likes (Beullah, Drover), has dislikes (Plato, Pete), has no sense of
Have His Day

humor or of the absurd (especially when viewing himself), and suffers from righteous indignation. We see a little of ourselves in Hank.

4. The entire series is a parody of the "western" experience in terms of ranching and the image of the "western psyche."

5. Erickson includes an extra fillip of vocabulary, and he plays with the language—using spoonerisms, made-up words, misunderstood homonyms, incorrect definitions, and adjectives. The series is also an excellent introduction to colloquialisms.

CONCEPTS:
The concepts should be limited to no more than five. The ones I've chosen for the unit

1. An original world has been created, and the author assumes that world is the true universe. The stories are FANTASY.
2. The society within that world is explored to give it credibility.
3. All events, other characters, and episodes are told from the point of view of the main character (Hank). The stories are first person narratives.
4. All the main animal characters are personified.

LITERARY TERMS:
Choose no more than twelve literary terms for a four-week unit. For this unit:

cliche          conflict

dramatic illusion  episode

fantasy         foreshadowing

imagery         monologue

narrator         parody

personification   protagonist/antagonist

READING LIST:
The reading list is all of the Hank the Cowdog series. The students may read any combination of the books in the series, but it would be wise to begin with the first book, Hank the Cowdog. You might want to read the first book to the students, giving them clues about what they should be looking for as they read the other adventures.

As you continue with a literature-based reading program, try organizing your units by genre (fantasy, real life, survival), or by content topic (western pioneers, things that wriggle and squirm, characters with fur). Whatever you do, remember it must be fun and just do it!

Construction of a Porta-Center

You are writing a Porta-Center for one book in the Hank series. The Case of the Missing Cat. Take a sheet of paper, and divide it in half. Put "FACTS" over the left-hand column, and "CONCEPTS" over the right-hand column. Begin with the facts: Hank and Pete enter into a wager; Hank is duped by Pete into a wager he cannot win; Hank loses his job as Head of Ranch Security; Drover claims there has been a murder of a "disheartened" chicken; Drover sits in the water from the septic tank; Hank takes Pete off the ranch into coyote country; Hank rescues Pete. Using only the verbs that give Knowledge and Comprehension tasks, complete the worksheet. Remember, you can use only the facts the students glean from reading the story. Examples:

• Summarize the terms of the wager between Hank and Pete.
• Explain why Hank cannot win the wager.
• Tell what Hank must do.
• Record the solution to the murder of the "disheartened" chicken.
• Recall the reason why Drover sits in the water from the septic tank.
• Explain why Hank takes Pete into coyote country and then rescues him.

Be sure to write an answer key. It will help you to remember the details of the story, and, eventually, you will want the students to check their own work rather than checking their answers yourself.

Under Concepts, list the ideas you want the students to understand from the story. They might include: the creation and exploration of an original world, point of view, first person narrative. Then, look at the literary terms you have chosen. From The Case of the Missing Cat, you might select: dramatic illusion (suspension of disbelief), episodes, parody, fantasy, monologue, conflict, foreshadowing, and protagonist/antagonist. Using verbs from the Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation levels, construct tasks which end in a product. You will need eight tasks. Examples:

Application:
• Illustrate one episode in the story by making a movie in a box.
• Write a paragraph in which you apply the concept of fantasy to the story. Give two examples to prove your point.

Analysis:
• Discover one incidence of foreshadowing in the story. As the Lumber-pile Bunny, deliver a monologue about the event.
• If Hank is the protagonist and Pete the Barncat is the antagonist, examine their relationship. As Drover, give an oral observation report to Hank.

Synthesis:
• Incorporating what you know about Hank, write another episode for an encounter with Pete and the Lumber-pile Bunny.
• Imagine a new sleeping place for Hank. Draw a picture of his new accommodations.

Evaluation:
• Recommend a new, permanent resident for the ranch with whom Hank can share his feelings and attitudes. Write a brief personality profile for this character.
• Criticize Mr. Erickson's use of personification. Write a literary critique for a children's magazine, detailing your point of view.

Design a task card shape, and write a task on each of the cards. For this unit, you will write a Porta-Center for each of the books you choose to use from the series.
argue about, and perhaps even repeat. Reflection is discouraged in our schools in this age, but what is worth knowing is often not easily comprehended.

Young people are hurried through reading experiences according to schedules. Where responses to reading are "programmed" by the teachers, the highly able reader is apt to develop slipshod, casual, or superficial responses to literature. It is not inappropriate for students to learn that enlightenment is not available to the indifferent dabbler: it generally requires sustained effort and concentration. However, both the result and the quest itself are among life's greatest pleasures.

SEAY: It has been argued that early reading may be damaging to the child: the child's eye muscles are insufficiently mature prior to school age to withstand the stress of near-point reading without inviting eyestrain. Further, pushing children into premature reading would cause anxiety and emotional distress. What response would you make to these critics?

HARRIS: Blanket assertions that the eye is not sufficiently well developed to cope with the act of reading until first grade are simply not substantiated by clinical studies. Bigg and Hunt in their book, Psychological Foundations of Education: An Introduction to Human Development and Learning, cite a range of three to eight years as being typical of the readiness period. The gifted have an even wider range. Pushing children beyond their abilities may indeed be anxiety-producing. ALLOWING gifted children to work up to their potential may alleviate frustrations rather than cause distress. Distinction needs to be drawn between pressuring and permitting. What may be unreasonable expectations for the average child may be met with only minimal effort by the gifted. The concept of pushing is the superimposition of a set of values unrelated to the perspective of an avid learner. What some adults see as laborious and tedious—that is, learning—some children see as rewarding, pleasurable, even joyous.

SEAY: Some argue that the cognitive challenges raised by reading are beyond the processing ability of an immature child and that any semblance of comprehension is illusory.

HARRIS: Those who doubt children's ability to process information may be simplistically linking chronological age and comprehension skills. When Stevie, an extraordinary six-and-a-half-year old, was asked if he was encountering any problems in his home reading, he reported that he was currently involved in a long-range project of reading the Old Testament and had become confused by the similarities between the personages of Abraham Lincoln and Abraham, the patriarch. When he was prompted to explain, he replied that both men were leaders of nations. Probed as to his understanding of what a nation was, he responded, "A nation is a group of people living together, with the same government, talking the same language, using the same coins, but not always understanding each other." It would be difficult to present a convincing argument that this child's comprehension was "illusory."

SEAY: Educators and psychologists frequently refer to a state of readiness—a period occurring in the child's development when he or she is receptive to learning a new concept, integrating new information, or gaining new insights.

HARRIS: Although some of these cautions may be operative for some children, it is obvious from biographies and case studies of the gifted, particularly the most highly successful readers, that such caveats are not applicable to them. When children teach themselves to read, it is hard to argue that they have not yet achieved a proper readiness state.

SEAY: Some educators contend that highly able readers are the best judges of suitable reading material for themselves, that individual and personal preferences are important factors in book selection. Should the gifted student be the guide of his own reading?

HARRIS: No matter how gifted children may be, compared to adults they are experientially poor and generally without access to selection guides and professional tools. Even more critical is the problem of judgment. Taste is not a fully developed, innate gift; it is something that evolves over time, abetted most effectively by exposure to many examples of excellence. Children cannot be expected to know the range of what is available, to recognize cliche-ridden, hackneyed, exploitive, or generally inferior writing, or even to prefer that which is superior. Given a choice between intellectually nourishing books and sensational, trite stories children, like adults, are as apt to choose the latter as the former.

SEAY: What if they enjoy these?

HARRIS: Children can be induced not only to accept, but to prefer books which are inferior in quality. There need be little concern that young people will lack sufficient contact with works of lesser quality for comparison since no reliable reports have recently appeared announcing shortages of poor-quality material.

SEAY: Aren't they harmless?

HARRIS: It shouldn't ever be assumed that inferior works are harmless. Some writers have suggested that the mediocre builds laziness. At an age when adolescents are best prepared for challenge, it is unjust to deny a challenge to them. To suggest that they are, without guidance, able to or willing to select high-quality books presumes a romanticized view of youth. The obligation then remains with adults to guide them into encounters with the best so that they can develop their own standards.

SEAY: What about using books on lists of award winners?

HARRIS: Books that are selected as the outstanding literary choices may make minimal cognitive demands on gifted readers. Although recipients of this literary honor can generally be characterized as requiring reading fluency, many are obtusely didactic, highly directive, or overly interpretive—neatly resolving all issues instead of requiring the creative engagement of the reader. But because a title is difficult does not necessarily mean it is an appropriate book for high ability readers. A volume may be attractive to gifted adolescents because of the complexity of the subject matter or the mode of presentation, yet may necessitate only cognition of mnemonic responses, avoiding any higher-level intellectual demands. You see, although the requirements may be high, the returns to the reader may be modest.
Texas Educator To Serve On Prestigious Panel

Evelyn Levsky Hiatt, Director of Programs for the Division of Gifted/Talented Education at the Texas Education Agency (and a past president of TAGT), was invited to serve on the ten-person review panel of the U.S. Department of Education National Report on Gifted Education. Hiatt was selected to represent the Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted at the meeting of the review panel in Washington, D.C., on July 11-12, 1991.

The report, which will be the first federal report on gifted education since the Marland Report in 1972, was developed as part of the provisions included in the Jacob K. Javits Gifted Students Education Act of 1988. A steering committee, composed of educators and business and community leaders, has been working on the draft report for almost two years. Although the report has not yet been disseminated to review panel members, it promises to create a great deal of discussion.

According to Hiatt, “Pat O’Connell Ross, director of the Javits program at Department of Education, says that the report offers new directions for gifted education. However, there is surprisingly little information on what those directions are. It has been stated, however, that a new federal definition is included in the report as well as changes in terminology relating to gifted youth. Because of the importance of a report such as this in guiding federal and state funding and policy issues, I am pleased that Texas will have a voice in shaping its outcome.”

Hiatt will provide a synopsis of the meeting in the fall issue of TAGT tempo.

San Angelo Youth Group Produces Opera

By Mary L. Seay, San Angelo ISD

Fifty-six San Angelo fifth through twelfth graders wrote, produced, and presented their own opera, Choices in Riverside, on July 1, at the San Angelo River Stage.

The play, libretto, and score were written by the students, guided by Scott Palmer, a consultant to the Metropolitan Opera Education Program, and four teachers who recently received special training offered by the Metropolitan Opera Company at Auburn University: AnnaMargaret Anderson, Carolyn Sunderman, Anne Mills, and Susan Fike.

The cast of students all starred in the story of two gangs of kids making choices. The final result of the action is that everyone realizes that we all have the power within to be good or bad in any given set of circumstances. The project was jointly sponsored by the San Angelo ISD Gifted Programs, the Cultural Affairs Council, and the City Recreation Department.
Common Study Theme Unifies Breckenridge Students

By Judy Toliver, Director of Instruction, Breckenridge ISD

At an organizational meeting of the district G/T teachers early in the school year, the teachers came to the realization that their students, K-12, could benefit from studying a common theme. Older students could help create materials for younger ones, and all could work cooperatively in producing a spring exhibit for display at the local fine arts center.

"Myths, Legends, and Tall Tales" was chosen as the theme for the joint project which snowballed to include a great deal of parental participation.

The final products ranged from slide and sound presentations to traditional sculptures. It included larger than life free standing cardboard cut-outs of American legends painted by kindergarten classes and 8x10 photographs of first graders dressed as the mythological characters in stories they retold. Other elementary campuses produced puppets, paper mache figures, murals (one in the form of a puzzle depicting the St. George and the dragon legend), and original legends of the Texas Longhorn breed. The junior high school also had a mural as well as scale models of ancient Greek architectural wonders from g/t math classes.

The junior high campus' projects took a chronological view of myths and legends in Western Civilization. A time line depicted the developments on which the projects elaborated. Stemming from their study of Homer's Odyssey, the high school students wrote their own epic verses in iambic hexameter with epic similes, invocations to a Muse, and epithets. Their subjects were their modern day heroes. Verses and representations of their heroes were presented on elaborate posters. Many other projects were presented by students from all levels and classes.

The Breckenridge Fine Arts Museum's director's request that another "theme exhibit" be scheduled for next year in the main gallery is just one of the measures of the show's success. The best gauge of its worth, however, is the pride which the students experienced from seeing their works displayed in a fine arts center.

Problem Solving Program Topics

Topics for the 1991-1992 Texas Future Problem Solving Program (FPSP) are:
- Space Exploration
- Legal Epidemic
- Sports Ethics
- Land Use
- Advertising

Working in teams of four, students apply the creative problem-solving process to the topic they are studying:

I: Brainstorm Possible Solutions
II: Identify an Underlying Problem
III: Brainstorm Alternative Solutions
IV: Choose Criteria for Evaluating Alternative Solutions
V: Evaluate Alternative Solutions
VI: Describe the Best Solution

For additional information contact the Texas FPSP Office (after July 30) at:

Pleasant Hill Annex
305 North Bluff Drive
Austin, TX 78745
512/447-0529

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We would like to recognize outstanding achievements by g/t classes, individual students, and parent affiliates in every issue of tempo. However, we can only do this if YOU tell us what is happening! Send brief announcements of workshops, special projects, awards, or unusual activities to tempo in care of the TACT Austin office.
## Calendar of G/T Events

**Date**: August 6–9 and 8–9  
**Event**: Summer Training Conference, FPSP Coaches  
**Site**: Red Lion Hotel, Austin  
**Sponsor**: TEA/Austin ISD  
**Contact**: Texas Future Problem Solving Program  
**Pleasant Hill Annex**  
305 North Bluff Drive  
Austin, TX 78745  
**Fee**: $55 and $45  

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**Contact**: Texas Future Problem Solving Program  
**Pleasant Hill Annex**  
305 North Bluff Drive  
Austin, TX 78745  
**Fee**: $55 and $45  

**Date**: August 10, 1991  
**Event**: Prescription for Success: Parenting the Gifted  
**Site**: Hyatt Regency Austin  
**Sponsor**: TAGT and TEA  
**Contact**: TAGT  
P.O. Box 9802 #814  
Austin, TX 78766–9802  
512/343-1886  
**Fee**: $20  

**Date**: August 13, 1991  
**Event**: Region VII G/T Workout  
**Site**: Kilgore, TX  
**Sponsor**: Region VII ESC  
**Contact**: Betty Strickland  
P.O. Box 1622  
Kilgore, TX 75662  
214/984-3071  
**Fee**: $15  

**Date**: August 13–16, 1991  
**Event**: Region XVIII G/T Roundup  
**Site**: Midland, TX  
**Sponsor**: Region XVIII ESC  
**Contact**: B.K. Dean  
P.O. Box 60580  
Midland, TX 79711  

**Date**: October 1991  
**Event**: Southeast Texas Regional Conference  
**Site**: Beaumont ISD  
**Contact**: Marianne Fiorenza  
3395 Harrison  
Beaumont, TX 77706  
409/899-8872  

**Date**: October 3–5, 1991  
**Event**: Instructional Clinic for Educators  
**Site**: Red Lion Hotel, Austin  
**Sponsor**: TEA/Austin ISD  
**Contact**: Texas Future Problem Solving Program  
**Pleasant Hill Annex**  
305 North Bluff Drive  
Austin, TX 78745  
**Fee**: $45  

**Date**: November 20–23, 1991  
**Event**: TAGT Annual Conference  
**Site**: Dallas, DFW-Hyatt-Twin Towers  
**Sponsor**: TAGT  
**Contact**: TAGT  
P.O. Box 9802 #814  
Austin, TX 78766–9802  
512/343-1886  

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## Available From TAGT

### Publications

**Identification of Gifted/Talented Students** by Amanda Batson, Susan Johnsen, Thomas Oakland, and Ann Shaw (75 pp), $6.00 plus postage and handling.  

**University Programs in Gifted Education in the State of Texas**, produced by the University Network for Gifted Education, $1.50 postage and handling.  

**The White House Scholarships: An Update**  
Residential scholarships for women at The White House are available.  

The White House, a residence for women adjacent to the University of Texas campus in Austin, is offering through TAGT scholarships of $500 or $1,000 each. The scholarships are available to undergraduate or graduate women students, including teachers, for any summer or regular session.  

The White House provides a quiet, secure environment for serious students and is conveniently located in the West Campus area. A variety of private and semi-private accommodations, including meals, is available. Anyone interested in further information or in applying for these residential scholarships should contact The White House, 2819 Rio Grande, Austin, TX 78705, 512/476-5657.  

**TAGT Membership Pins**, $3.25  

Watch for future items available from TAGT including:  

**Resource Guide for Parents of Gifted** produced by the Parent/Community Involvement Committee of TAGT  

**Writing Units that Challenge** by Dr. Jim Curry, University of Southern Maine.  

For information and ordering please contact:  
TAGT  
P.O. Box 9802 #814  
Austin, TX 78766-9802  
512/343-1886
1991 Summer Schola

Carole Vermillion
Award Winners

Sunny Chu
Plano ISD

Rushani Wirasinghe
Klein ISD, Region 4

Region 1
Jose Zaragosa Garcia, Ill
Roma ISD

Robin Loftin
Harlingen ISD

Becki Kay Torres
San Benito ISD

Region 2
Colin Dodd
Gregory ISD

Sarah Ashley Harkey
Portland ISD

Megan Livingston
Odem-Leroy ISD

James Murr
Bishop CISD

Gabriel Eric Naranjo
Corpus Christi ISD

Nathan Heath Shearer
Bishop CISD

Region 3
Mel Cowan
Victoria ISD

James Bryan Mason
Bay City ISD

Peter Jerome Stauber
Bay City ISD

Region 4
Josh Cohagen
West Rusk ISD

Eric Stephen Daniel
Deer Park ISD

Paul Ellis
Houston ISD

Christopher Jarrell Green
Deer Park ISD

John Johnson
Galena Park ISD

Carrie Lovitt
Katy ISD

Jennifer Meriwether
Texas City ISD

Andrew Norton
Klein ISD

Joshua Parkinson
Needville ISD

Jennifer Lea Partin
Deer Park ISD

Jessica Sammon
Humble ISD

Alisah Serenil
Galena Park ISD

Brian C. Smith
Ft. Bend ISD

Jennifer Tyler
Galena Park ISD

Andrew VonKanel
Deer Park ISD

Region 5
Marit Babin
Woodville ISD

Region 6
Jennifer Oringderff
Conroe ISD

Region 7
Alison Porath
Conroe ISD

Region 8
Robin Elaine Prosier
Bullard ISD

Amanda Slaughter
Lindale ISD

Region 9
Melissa Browning
Maud ISD

Region 10
Tiffany Nicole Bonner
Jacksboro ISD

Summer Cheyenne Dean
Jacksboro ISD

Lance Morse
Nocona ISD

Region 11
Clint Biggs
Alvarado ISD

David Edward Mather
Coppell ISD

Safford Black
Plano ISD

Joanna Chan
Plano ISD

Stewart Chang
Carrollton-Farmers' Branch ISD

Sandy Chirachanchai
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Jessica Coleman
Midlothian ISD

Todd Konkel
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Melissa Ludwig
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Christie Conner
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Dana Nichole Delk
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Lauren Jennifer Downing
White Settlement ISD

Angela Deanne Hodges
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Jennifer Orona
Ft Worth ISD

Jamie Sanders
Dublin ISD
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Jay Michael Thompson
White Settlement ISD

Cecelia Torres
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Mark Alan Gifford
Gholson ISD

Charles Franklin Johnson
Hamilton ISD

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Abilene ISD

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Abilene ISD

Zan Hurley
Abilene ISD

Paige Robinson
Abilene ISD

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San Angelo ISD

Vicki Crouch
San Angelo ISD

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Perryton ISD

Sarah Graham
Stratford ISD

Dominick Herrald
Perryton ISD

Heather Husmann
Stratford ISD

Meredith Kemp
Amarillo ISD

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Perryton ISD

Allison Martinez
Hart ISD

Region 18
Angela Glass
Slaton ISD

Region 20
Liz Capron
Ft. Davis ISD

Heather Joy Ferguson
San Vicente ISD

Quincy Nolly
Midland ISD

Jocelyn Potter
San Vicente ISD

Crystal Potter
San Vicente ISD

Erica Danielle Solis
McCamey ISD

David Martin Tilton
San Vicente ISD

Emma Bribiescas
Harlandale ISD

Amerika D. Garcia
Eagle Pass ISD

Alice Suzanne Gonzalez
East Central ISD

Kelly James
Northside ISD

Malia Knezek
East Central ISD

Lindsey Rae Loessberg
Medina Valley ISD

PARENTS AND EDUCATORS
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Texas Woman's University

James L. Bell
William Faulkner Independent Study

Lori Bennett
Texas Woman's University

Linda N. Boyd
A & M/Dissertation/Research

Doralee Castillo
Texas Woman's University

Janis Ruth Christensen
UT-Austin

Dotty Cooley
University of Houston/England Program

Linda Cox
Baylor University Endorsement

Jenise Cronan
Sam Houston State/G/T-Supervision

Susan Conrad Gordon
Lamar University/Practicum: PED

Linda Klett
Baylor University

Nancy Lashaway
University of Cr-/EPSY

Marcie Holt Pair
Hardin Simmons University

Martha Rose
A & M University/Galveston

Janet Stacy
Hardin Simmons University
SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented
November 20 – 23, 1991
Hyatt Regency DFW
DFW Airport, Texas

• Pre-registration required for each conference session
Pre-registration Conference Session Catalogues and registration materials will be mailed in August. Pre-register for your preferred conference sessions. Register early to reserve your seat! (TAGT can not be responsible for delays in receipt of your registration from your ISD.)

TAGT will make every effort to put the “most popular” sessions in larger rooms and/or repeat these sessions.

• A first for TAGT: Tickets for admittance to each session
You must have a ticket for admittance to a session. Your ticket ensures you a reserved seat. Tickets will be in your 1991 TAGT Conference packet at conference check-in beginning 4:00 p.m. on November 20 at the Hyatt Regency DFW.

• Two TAGT Pre-Conference Institutes
In-depth, “how-to” sessions with limited enrollments November 20 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency DFW. $45 registration fee covers materials, coffee, and lunch.

Dorothy Sisk
Leadership: A Special Kind of Giftedness

Irving Sato
Programs for the Gifted/Talented: Management and Accountability

• Visits to exemplary G/T programs throughout the Metroplex
A special event on November 20 coordinated by the Local Arrangements Committee. Limited participation—First-come-first-served. Nominal transportation fee. Visitation sites include elementary, middle, and high school programs and The Texas Academy for Mathematics and Sciences.
• **Featured Speakers**
  - Madeline Hunter
  - Roger Taylor
  - Gina Ginsburg Riggs
  - James Curry
  - Henry Cisneros
  - Additional special-topic speakers

• Conference registration fee—still only $75.00!

• Conference attendance may be used toward the 30 hour staff development requirement for g/t teachers

• AAT credit available for late afternoon, evening, and Saturday sessions.

• Exhibitors from across the state and nation with the latest products for excellent instruction.

• Fun-filled shopping and entertainment forays into the Dallas-Fort Worth areas.

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**CONFERENCE SITE:**

**THE TWIN TOWERS OF THE HYATT REGENCY DFW**

A convenient, spacious, and service-conscious hotel with meeting rooms that will accommodate us in style and comfort

1,000 sleeping rooms reserved for TAGT

Room rate: $74.00 a night (single, double, triple, or quad!!)

Various meal options available

Free Parking and waiver on toll fee

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Call 214/453-1234
to reserve your room.

Tell the reservations clerk you will be attending the TAGT conference; the first night's rate will serve as a deposit.
1991 GRANTS FOR EXCELLENCE APPLICATION

Name of Project: ____________________________________________

Contact Person: _______________________________________________

Address: _________________________________________________________

City __________________________ State _________ Zip __________

Amount requested: __________________________

Please respond to the following (attach responses to application):

1. Provide an overview of your project, explaining its purpose, the audience it addresses, and how it will benefit either gifted students and/or the membership of TAGT.

2. Explain which of the TAGT goals your project will address and how.

3. Explain specifically how the funds you are requesting will be used (for example: honoraria for speakers, printing costs, postage for surveys).

4. What percentage of the total cost of your project does this request represent?

5. How will TAGT’s grant be acknowledged? (Examples include recognition of grant on printed materials, presentation at conference, etc.)

6. Explain the time-line of your project, including beginning and ending dates, expected date of implementation, etc.

Please return application by September 1, 1991 to:

TAGT
Attn: Grants for Excellence
PO Box 9802 #814
Austin, TX 78766-9802

Applicants will be notified by November 30, 1991.
Awards will be distributed after January 1, 1992.
Recipients will be asked to submit a brief evaluation on completion of the project.

Goals of the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented

1. To influence statewide legislation concerned with gifted and talented programming and to increase funding for those programs.

2. To promote statewide public awareness of gifted education.

3. To increase membership in TAGT.

4. To strengthen the relationship between TAGT, the Texas Education Agency and the State Board of Education, and other educational organizations.

5. To emphasize the importance of parental leadership in the educational process.

6. To publish documents that offer assistance to Association members.

7. To seek additional financial support for Association programs with specific emphasis on its scholarship program for teachers, parents, and students.

8. To foster improved communication between the Association and colleges and universities in Texas.

About The Grants for Excellence Program

The TAGT Grants for Excellence Program was begun in 1987 to provide financial assistance to individuals and organizations in Texas. The intent of the grants program is to encourage those that reach out to the gifted by helping them implement appropriate projects.

The Parent-Community Involvement Committee of the TAGT Executive Board is soliciting nominations for the 1992 Grants for Excellence Awards. Tax-exempt organizations and individuals whose projects support the goals of TAGT are invited to submit proposals at this time. These awards (of up to $1,000 each) are given to support specific innovative projects, programs, or activities that address the needs of gifted students.
SEAY: Some teachers and librarians contend that if middle schoolers are functioning as adults, then adult reading matter is the obvious choice for them.

HARRIS: Gifted young people are still young people, and some acknowledgment and concession must be made to their level of maturity. Chronological age more nearly approximates mental age. The problem remains to locate cognitively challenging works written on an appropriate developmental level, and there are few adult titles addressed to the interest and maturational stage of prepuberty youngsters. Although biographies of geniuses have noted that they were avid readers of adult classics, often they had the intervention of a tutor, mentor, or parent to mediate the experience, and even more critically, their choices appeared to be either adult literature or nothing. Fortunately, this situation no longer prevails, and the expansion of the juvenile market, marked by a proliferation of excellent books, has resulted in the availability of sufficient titles to answer the most specialized needs.

SEAY: What should we look for?

HARRIS: Books should be identified for high-ability students on the basis of both intrinsic and extrinsic qualities. They need to be assessed not only in terms of language, structure, and content—characteristics inherent in each work—but also by their potential for eliciting intellectual response from the reader, a condition external to the book.

SEAY: What is the single most significant component to be considered in judging books for these students?

HARRIS: Language. It should be rich, varied, accurate, precise, complex, and exciting; for language is the premier instrumentality for the reception and expression of thought.

An individual’s knowledge and use of language inhibit or facilitate the processing of information, as well as determine whether it will be noted at all. It is essential for cognition. It allows identification through the application of labels and fosters distinctions that are crucial to synthesizing, categorizing, analyzing, and generalizing. We seem to store things in our minds as their verbal labels.

SEAY: What is the most important ability we gain from reading?

HARRIS: That ability to label. It is essential to any effort to bring order into our lives. Every experience is unique, varying in components, duration, intensity, and more. Yet, if common qualities cannot be identified, if generalizations cannot be made, one is trapped in what Piaget called “the manifest and irreducible present,” and experience is not only NOT the best teacher, it is no teacher at all.

SEAY: How can the schools make a difference?

HARRIS: The problem with school libraries is that the librarians have little or no training in what a gifted reader is or what his or her needs are. Studies typically endorse librarians’ impressions that highly able readers are disproportionately represented in circulation statistics—consumers of more titles more quickly. Better inservice training in this area could be one answer.

The problem with classrooms is that teachers do not have adequate instruction, training, or information about the gifted. The teachers may feel challenged by the behavior of extraordinarily bright students. The literature is replete with instances of punitive responses to the highly able.

Another troubling area is that the students may be doing what they consider mediocre work, but they are given highest marks for this effortless output. Teachers need training in what is probing, inquiring, critical delving. They also need training in how to go deeply into literary areas, and concern themselves less with the quantity of material taught than the quality. State legislatures and state school boards may need some training here.

SEAY: If you could leave us one last idea.

HARRIS: I'd have to say that books are not just as a substitute for active engagement in life experiences, but as a means to distill, expand, deepen, recall, and relate to social, biological, and cultural history. Books are tools that students can use to seek knowledge of themselves, to help them understand what their futures could be, to make intelligent decisions about how one's personal life might be lived, and to consider how the just society will be formed and sustained. Through books, gifted adolescent readers can gain a firm awareness of the interrelationships among the branches of what is known, the inexorable links among poetry, mathematics, science, history, and mythology.

This is not as pretentious as it may appear since the child will only too soon be called upon to make critical choices. Let's pose this question: How intellectually or aesthetically ready will he or she be to exercise those options? The quality and scope of the literary experience play a critical role in that answer.

BEERS (continued from page 7)

events can easily become efferent activities, ones that focus on getting information (Rosenblatt, 1985). In the gifted class I visited, this seemed to be the case, even when the students were reading trade books.

Jami explained, and the teacher verified, that they wrote seven book reports. These reports "just made me hate the books." Alex reported that several of the projects they did throughout the year were based on comparing authors or comparing books by the same author and then making evaluations about the books or authors. He quickly learned that when he read novels, books that he initially thought would mean "fun reading," he needed to take notes on style, plot, and characters so he could make the comparisons later. "So it looks like it ought to be fun reading, but the whole time I have to keep reminding myself to read for details and not just read to see what happened." He's describing the need to read efferently when he would prefer to read aesthetically.

Rosenblatt (1985) explains the difference in efferent and aesthetic stances. An efferent stance focuses the readers' attention on what should be remembered after the reading event, while an aesthetic stance focuses their attention on what is felt during that event. A program filled with efferent reading may produce skilled readers; it may also produce non-readers.

Without doubt, gifted students need to read efferently. They need to carry away information and apply it to new con-
texts. However, just because they are gifted does not mean they do not also need to read aesthetically, for recreational purposes. Continually using literature as a springboard for independent projects, writing assignments, or art activities gives students the message that reading isn’t a worthwhile project in and of itself. To keep this from happening, we need to provide time for recreational reading.

As you incorporate more recreational reading time into your students’ day, you will be giving them a time to reflect, a time to explore new genres, a time to encounter new ideas, and time to become a community of readers. And most importantly, you’ll be showing Tim, and all others like him, that reading isn’t just for writing.

References
Atwell, N. In the middle: Writing, reading, and learning with adolescents. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1987


This picture story book, lavishly illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon, recounts the story behind the opera Aida by Verdi. Aida, princess of Ethiopia, is captured by Egyptian soldiers and forced into slavery. She falls in love with an Egyptian soldier and is torn between loyalties to her country and the love of her warrior. The tale of the Ethiopian and Egyptian conflict which leads to the death of two lovers from different cultures is a timeless one. The story retains the flavor of a traditional folk tale and the illustrations vividly celebrate the two cultures.

Follow Up

This book would serve as an appropriate introduction to opera for children and young adults who might want to listen to a recording of Price singing the role of Aida. Students who are interested in opera could write their own children’s book version of the story behind the opera. Retelling the story and setting it in contemporary countries would also be an interesting variation.


This volume contains excerpts from diaries, letters, speeches, articles, and interviews of American women from colonial times to the present. Through these selections and the brief introductory material, Rappaport presents a lively chronicle of the significant contributions made by women as diverse as a seventeen-year-old Chinese woman who discovers that she is meant to become a prostitute rather than a mail-order bride in the New World, to Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman doctor in the United States, to Ida B. Wells, an eighteen year old who filed a lawsuit challenging the Jim Crow laws of the railroad industry. Some of the women featured in the book are familiar historical figures. Rappaport includes material on Eleanor Roosevelt, Anne Bradstreet, Margaret Sanger, Sacajawea, and Margaret Mead to name a few. However, the glimpses into the lives of ordinary women during various times in history provide the reader with true insight into the past.

Follow Up

Rappaport’s work serves as a model for the use of primary sources in research. Used in conjunction with a study of American history, this book would supplement the text nicely. Students may wish to try their hands at oral history as well.


This Newbery Award book is part-truth, part-fiction, and part “snowball” according to the introduction. Maniac Magee is an orphan who travels to a town split by racial intolerance. His feats and adventures serve to bring the town closer together. The various adventures of Maniac and his adopted families are by turns, hilarious, touching, and warm.

Follow Up

The language, rich in imagery, simile, metaphor, and symbol, would provide material for literary analysis. The story, however, is perfect for reading aloud to students who will be enchanted with Maniac and his feats of derring-do. Maniac is a contemporary John Henry, Paul Bunyan, and Johnny Appleseed all rolled into one; hence, a study of legends and tall tales would also be an appropriate follow up.


This collection of poetry explores the dark side of some very familiar stories such as Cinderella and Little Red Riding Hood. The more sensuous and dangerous nature of these tales is revealed through Strauss’ work. Cinderella draws the face of her prince in the ashes of the fireplace and reminisces about the strong, warm arms of the prince as they danced at the ball. The wolf contemplates taking Red Riding Hood after her walk in the woods. He muses about her innocence and the pleasure it will bring to him.

Follow Up

As in the case of Ruby, students may compare and contrast these versions of fairy tales with more traditional ones. Students may also explore writing their own verse-poems presenting a different slant on familiar stories. These poems are ideal for literary analysis in high school classrooms.

LESESNE

(continued from page 9)

the animals from the ark by calling them by name. After he has finished, he looks around and discovers that there are still many creatures who remain and he begins to usher them from the ark. The animals which follow are 132 species which are either extinct or endangered in contemporary societies. Each animal is labeled for the reader as well as pictured in proportion to the other animals. This book also breaks the boundaries of design in that the reader must rotate the book to its horizontal position. At the end of the story, Jonas provides more information about each of the species.

Follow Up

This book is a must for the science class studying animals and the environment. Students who are interested in the endangerment of species may use this book as a starting point in their research. The format of the book may also provide students with a useful model.
SPOTLIGHTING PARENT AFFILIATES

Tyler Friends Of The Gifted

Founded in the fall of 1982 by Myrtis D. Smith and thirty-seven parents and educators, Tyler Friends of the Gifted (TFOG) is one of the oldest and most active TAGT parent affiliates. TFOG is “in the spotlight,” sharing with you some of the exciting projects sponsored by this group.

The guiding force behind TFOG’s growth and success has been the dedicated efforts of its membership to accomplish the goals which were developed by the organizing steering committee:

• Publishing a newsletter 3 to 5 times each school year
• Locating resources (people, information, equipment, money) which could help classroom teachers
• Organizing exploratory learning opportunities on Saturdays and/or in the summer
• Sponsoring seminars on gifted education
• Sponsoring presentations by experts in the field
• Arranging opportunities for interchange among parents and between parents and educators
• Creating a library of materials about gifted education
• Developing a program on gifted education in the community for presentation at club meetings
• Disseminating information on proposed state and national legislation which would affect gifted education
• Advising school administrators about program needs
• Influencing the school board to support programs for gifted from K–12
• Establishing an endowment fund to provide “bonuses” for outstanding teaching, extra funds for training teachers, and scholarships for deserving students

One more goal was recently added:
• Giving students an opportunity for an audience

TFOG has developed many projects, activities, and programs to achieve these goals. Let’s begin with the flagship of TFOG’s opportunities for the gifted—STAR-SPANGLED SUMMER!, TFOG’s summer enrichment program.

STAR-SPANGLED SUMMER is a potpourri of classes offered during the summer to children of TFOG members. The 54 classes listed in this year’s brochure range from foreign languages to recycling, to gun safety and woodworking; from arts and crafts to weather forecasting. Classes are conducted by volunteers, parents and other friends of the gifted, often in the home or business of the volunteer; course length ranges from one to six classes. To quote from the brochure: Star-Spangled Summer... has been planned to offer a variety of stimulating activities to interested students. Having fun was a major consideration in designing the program, but making new friends and discovering new fields of interest were also considered.

(Some of you may have caught TFOG's presentation at last year's Annual Conference, complete with “falling stars.”)

TFOG is also active throughout the year providing enrichment to students, parents, and teachers. Here is a sampling from TFOG’s smorgasbord of activities and programs:

• The newly-created Myrtis D. Smith Scholarship was awarded to two teachers enabling them to attend seminars in their fields.
• The Mentor Program matches students with volunteers in different fields to give participants some exposure to the “real-life” of practicing professionals. This year’s 51 mentors and 29 students were honored at a barbeque dinner.
• Bright Ideas Product Fair, a one-day presentation of student projects to meet the goal of “giving students an opportunity for an audience.”

Some of the energetic people who have made these activities a reality this past year include President Nancy Patterson, Past-President Marsha Harrison, President-Elect Debbie Lundy, Treasurer Nancy Bethancourt, TFOG Times Editor Jenise Hurley, and activities coordinators Jacqueline Schmerus, Debbie Sword, and Kay Ellis. Myrtis Smith and Kathy Harry, TISD G/T Coordinator (and a 1991 TAGT Advocate of the Gifted award winner), serve as consultants to the group.
1991 Candidates for the Executive Board

Each year the membership of TAGT elects new executive officers and one-half of the Regional Representatives; this year members in the odd-numbered regions will elect representatives. Ballots for the 1992 TAGT Executive Board Elections will be mailed to all members later this summer.

Reprinted below are statements submitted by the candidates at the request of the Nominations Committee. Please take this opportunity to familiarize yourself with the candidates and their positions. The statements will NOT be reprinted on the ballot itself.

**EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT-ELECT**

Ann Trull—Director, Gifted Education, Director, Elementary Education, Paris ISD: In fulfilling the major responsibility of President-Elect, I would provide leadership for planning the 1992 Annual Conference to be held at the new Austin Convention Center. I envision a professionally rewarding event which effectively meets the learning needs of a diverse membership and brings thousands of educators, parents, and other community members together as advocates for gifted children. This vision offers a challenge which I eagerly accept as both parent and educator.

Gordon Doggett—Assistant Principal, Spring Gordon Elementary, Hurst-Besse-Bedford ISD: Gifted education is fast becoming the curriculum standard in the state of Texas. Strategies developed to lead, guide, and facilitate gifted learners are producing creatively inspired, contributing future leaders at all levels. TAGT continues to play an integral role as advocate and facilitator of gifted education and a leader in the educational community.

**FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT**

Bob Senev—G/T Coordinator, Spring Branch ISD: I have served on the Editorial and Research Committee for the past three years. I have assisted in planning for the continued improvement of the TAGT tempo. As our organization grows, so must our official "voice," tempo must reflect the quality and professionalism of TAGT. I would like to continue to work to improve our journal not only as our major communication instrument, but also as an important source of information for advocacy, parents, and teachers.

Benny Hickerson—G/T Coordinator, Language Arts, Hurst-Besse-Bedford ISD: We've made important progress in Texas toward addressing the needs of our gifted population, and this is a crucial time for excellent leadership to see that these gains are maintained. As TAGT First Vice-President, my priorities will be: planning and implementing effective training programs in recognizing, identifying and serving the gifted, especially the very young; networks, newsletters, and other avenues for sharing ideas and strategies; and continued strong advocacy for the needs and rights of our gifted students.

**SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT**

Ann Weiss—G/T Consultant, Region IV ESC: As Second Vice-President of TAGT my goals would be: greatly increased service to all members through increased personal contact from their regional representatives, more printed information available to members, and regularly scheduled local, regional, and state meetings to share information. I believe I am well prepared to serve in this position because I have served as Secretary and Chair of the Scholarship Committee for 2 years and for 2 years I was a regional representative and member of the Advocacy Committee. I have worked closely with members and believe I have an understanding of our needs. I have been involved in gifted education for 20 years as parent, teacher, student, and consultant.

Marcy Voss—G/T Coordinator, La Grange ISD: One year after the mandate, advocacy of gifted education continues to be a critical issue. As Second Vice-President, I hope to promote advocacy through increasing membership, communicating with members, and supporting members in their efforts. Through the membership, I hope to build support for gifted education at the local, regional, and state legislative levels.

**THIRD VICE-PRESIDENT**

Dixie Kingston—San Antonio mother and businesswoman; I am currently serving as the first Third Vice-President in TAGT history. In this new position, I have spoken at two regional institutes, teacher in-services, and several parent organization meetings. I am responsible for the first ever joint TEA-TAGT Parent Conference to be held in Austin on August 10, 1991. I have set in motion plans for the first ever parent resource guide and hope to have it available by fall. I would very much appreciate the opportunity to see this good beginning through.

Van Carson—CPA and father of two gifted sons and active member of San Angelo Academic Booster Club, TAGT parent affiliate group: My goal as Third Vice-President would be to enhance educational opportunities for gifted and talented children in the school districts throughout the state. My hope is that enhancing education for gifted children will lead to the improvement of education for all students.

**SECRETARY**

Polly Jo James: My goals as secretary of TAGT and Chairperson of the Finance Committee would be to continue promoting the scholarship and Grants for Excellence programs in order to benefit students, parents, and educators; supporting the financial guidelines for TAGT; and assisting TAGT in its commitment to gifted education. I would work to foster the growth of TAGT as a service organization and support its many endeavors on behalf of gifted children.

Ann Williams—G/T Coordinator, McAllen ISD: As an advocate for gifted students and gifted education, I am aware of how necessary TAGT is. Through serving on the Professional Development Committee, I have acquired knowledge and experience about how TAGT can serve the needs of gifted children throughout the state of Texas. As Region I's representative I plan to continue to serve as a resource person for gifted students, parents, and teachers and to increase communication between TAGT and its membership.

**REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES**

ESC I

Ann Williams—G/T Coordinator, McAllen ISD: As an advocate for gifted students and gifted education, I am aware of how necessary TAGT is. Through serving on the Professional Development Committee, I have acquired knowledge and experience about how TAGT can serve the needs of gifted children throughout the state of Texas. As Region I's representative I plan to continue to serve as a resource person for gifted students, parents, and teachers and to increase communication between TAGT and its membership.

William Rubink—parent of gifted student; Bill is the first President of the Challenge Support Association of McAllen, a new parent affiliate group. He has led the group in establishing a summer enrichment program scholarship fund for promising math/science students and in sponsoring Jaime Escalante, the highly successful mathematics teacher featured in the...
movie Stand and Deliver, as a speaker in the McAllen area. He is interested having TAGT foster activities that stimulate parents and entice them to become more involved with their children.

Debra Baros—Principal, Hunt Elementary, Cuero ISD: I would like to activate the Midcoast Association for Gifted and Talented in Region III, provide working knowledge for constituencies' concerns through my active participation on the Policies and Practices Committee of TAGT, and be an avid encourager of creative learning so that creativity can be enhanced rather than denied in our culture so that gifted students become involved in something meaningful in life.

Annette Scott—Principal, Stonman High School, Victoria ISD: We must continue to raise the level of awareness of all people who are responsible for educating gifted and talented children. I see that my role is to be a voice for those children and the people who serve them. We must articulate their needs and find strategies and resources to help them soar.

Marianne Fiorenza—G/T Coordinator, Beaumont ISD: As Regional Representative of TAGT, I will continue the work already begun in establishing a strong network of advocates for gifted education in Southeast Texas. I will encourage TAGT to support regional efforts through the provision of workshops or seminars for g/t educators and parents in the Region V area.

Karen Dickson—G/T Coordinator, Union Grove ISD: My family consists of a husband, three daughters, and a dog. My goal if elected to be your representative, will be to make sure your voice is heard. Let's use the motto “Great Expectations” as it pertains to the advances in gifted education that each of us desires.

Marsha Harrison—Parent and active community volunteer; President of Tyler Friends of the Gifted: I heartily support parents and teachers becoming strong advocates of g/t education. Networking and monitoring legislation can make a difference. Supporting the teaching staff as they assist g/t students in reaching their full potential either through academic and creative genius will be a thrust for my tenure. I see three major, long-term challenges for TAGT: assessing and meeting needs of g/t education, identifying and influencing organizations involved in g/t education, and how to be more effective advocates.

Renata Otterbach—G/T Specialist, Region IX: I would like to have a TAGT-sponsored conference for both teachers and parents here in Wichita Falls. I also would work to increase parent participation in TAGT. Also, since many of our schools are small, many of our students and parents lack the opportunity to meet other G/T students or parents. I would like to set up Chester Days that will give both students and parents an opportunity to meet and share information and experiences.

Rebecca Gary—G/T Coordinator, Bowie Jr. High, Bowie ISD: The use of creative and critical thinking techniques in each of my classes, whether it be with a regular or a gifted group, has enhanced student learning skills and made my teaching an exciting experience. As a TAGT board member, I would promote the availability of staff development in gifted education techniques as a non-threatening experience for educators through a variety of methods. Above all else, I bring a love of learning and an enthusiasm for sharing knowledge with others as qualifications for my candidacy.

Ann Brock—Teacher and G/T Coordinator, Burleson ISD: As Region 11 Representative to TAGT my goal would be to continue to work diligently to improve communication and services from the organization. I want to increase the opportunities for g/t teachers to network, as we work to facilitate more parental involvement in TAGT. A major focus would be to continue to serve as a resource person and as well as to make all the opportunities and services available to TAGT members known to everyone in Region 11.

Pat Miller: As TAGT Representative for Region 11 I would continue the work that has enabled g/t education to flourish in Texas and be cognizant and active in the role g/t education can play in the process of educational change.

Mary Etheredge—Counselor and G/T Coordinator, Jack C. Hays HS, Hays CISD: I believe that one of the most important issues facing us in the upcoming years is the trend toward heterogeneous grouping in the classroom. I think we must continue to recognize gifted students as people with special needs which can only be met in special programs.

Gwendolyn Thomas Fort—Secondary English Teacher, Round Rock ISD: I pledge to create a communications network for idea exchanges and information about conferences and impending legislation to insure quality input from teachers, parents, and the general public. Further, I will be a disciple for organizing, facilitating, coordinating, and assisting teachers to serve fully the needs of g/t students, our hope for tomorrow.

Mary Seay—G/T Coordinator, San Angelo ISD: I would like to see TAGT broaden our efforts:

• to develop materials for better more accurate identification of young children.
• to work toward a certification requirement for teachers of gifted.
• to expand tempo in order to encourage the growth of research ideas among our teachers.
• to advocate a training team for school boards and legislators to help them realize why we need a special environment for some special kinds of youngsters.

Jean Gilles

Madeleine Bullock—G/T Teacher, Administrative Intern, Ysleta ISD: I am committed to TAGT’s dynamic role as an advocate of gifted students. TAGT must remain the front runner in shaping innovative programs, building resources, and promoting community support for gifted education throughout Texas. It is my goal to provide an informed leadership voice from Region XIX to the Executive Board.

Elizabeth Montes—Consultant, Language Arts, grades 6-8, El Paso ISD: I hope to help the educational institutions in Region XIX align themselves more closely with those in other geographic regions. Although West Texas is isolated from the mainstream of the state, it can contribute to and benefit from a better networking system. TAGT should be more far-reaching in its impact.
**The Book Shelf**

**Perchance To Dream: Good Books**

**HANK THE COWDOG SERIES**
By John Erickson

**Reviewed by Janet Slaughter**
In a small Texas Panhandle community, John Erickson continues to write the popular Hank the Cowdog series. These books have motivated many readers who never had time to read or, for some reason, never had experienced the joy of involvement in a good book. Gifted students comment on how these books, based on the humorous antics of the canine Head of Ranch Security, enable them to become a part of the story. As students read the many adventures, they begin to parallel their lives with those of the characters. Erickson personifies each character so wonderfully that readers easily identify with them. Then reading becomes enjoyable and fun.

As students race through the pages of these illustrated books, they experience many feelings as they find themselves involved in solving Hank’s problems. They feel the frustration of losing identity, as Hank does when the new baby comes home from the hospital. They feel a sense of pride as they become part of the process in helping Hank make decisions, such as returning home after running away from punishment which was unjust (thanks to his pal, Drover).

Teachers of gifted students have discovered that the educational value of Erickson’s writings is limitless. The series inspires students’ writing skills and their creativity. Many begin to create their own songs or raps. The format of the books also lends itself to be read in play form, thus students can become characters for the day.

The Hank the Cowdog series by John Erickson is published and managed by:

Cheryl J. Smith, Marketing Assistant
Gulf Publishing Company
Book Publishing Division
3301 Allen Parkway
P.O. Box 2608
Houston, TX 77252-2608
(713) 529-4301

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**GUIDING GIFTED READERS: FROM PRESCHOOL THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL**
A Handbook for Parents, Teachers, Counselors, and Librarians
By Judith Wynn Halsted

**Reviewed by Karen M. Fitzgerald**
If you are looking for suggestions on the use of literature with gifted children, this book is for you! The author believes that “books and reading can have a profound effect on the lives of gifted children.” Teachers and parents will find a wealth of information in this handbook.

This book consists of four main parts. Part one gives background information on the emotional and intellectual developmental needs of gifted children. Part two discusses reading patterns and bibliotherapy. In parts three and four the focus is on books. Here you will find the criteria for selecting books for gifted readers and an annotated bibliography.

The author strongly believes that teachers and parents can use books to guide the intellectual and emotional development of gifted children. She discusses reading interests at different grade levels from preschool to senior high. Of special interest is the sections on resistant gifted readers and on bibliotherapy. Halsted states, “The use of books to generate discussion with gifted youngsters about the emotional aspects of being gifted is a form of bibliotherapy.” In Chapter 4 she outlines certain techniques to lead book discussions. Halsted believes that for gifted children “bibliotherapy is a way of building on the strengths of their reading abilities, analytical skills, and heightened sensitivity.”

Chapter 7 includes a short course in children’s literature for adults who may need background information. Of special interest to teachers is the helpful annotated bibliography. This 162-title bibliography is divided into five age groups. Under each age grouping is a list of books in these categories: 1) identity; 2) aloneness; 3) getting along with others; 4) developing imagination and using abilities; and 5) the drive to understand.

The book concludes with a subject index, an author index, and a title index. This book is an excellent resource on reading for the gifted that you will want to read, study, and refer to frequently in your work with gifted children.

Ohio Psychology Publishing Company
131 North High Street, Suite 300
Columbus, Ohio 43215
1988
$16.95.

**FOUR SPECIAL BOOKS**
Selected by Bob Sterney

Like many of you, I have searched for appropriate literature that speaks to giftedness. These special books help us to hook our audiences and to focus our remarks in our advocacy for gifted education and in the classrooms for gifted students. I have found four works in children’s literature that readily lend themselves to read-aloud, to discussions of giftedness, and/or to sensitize audiences to issues in gifted education. These four books are shared for your information.

**THERE ARE THOSE**
by Nathan and Janet Levy

This illustrated poem depicts the experiences of those few “Who see much more than others do.” The brightly colored designs beautifully illustrate the unique nature and sensitivities of those few among us who see and hear “much more than melody” and who experience more in the world around them. This poem provides a wonderful introduction to a consideration of the uniqueness of the gifted individual. A discussion of the poem with gifted students of all ages will help them better define and understand their own giftedness.

**FREDERICK**
By Leo Lionni
Frederick, a field mouse, works and pre-

---

**tempo**
SUMMER 1991
books and Good Guide Books

pares for winter in a different way. His family accepts his uniqueness and allows him to harvest his own special "crop" of experiences, colors, and words. In the depth of winter when food supplies begin to run out, Frederick shares his supplies and brings pleasure to his family. This beautiful tribute to the poet and to the pares for winter in a different way. His family accepts his uniqueness and allows him to harvest his own special "crop" of experiences, colors, and words. In the depth of winter when food supplies begin to run out, Frederick shares his supplies and brings pleasure to his family. This beautiful tribute to the poet and to the

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Leo was just like all of the rest of the little rabbits in the forest, except for his ears. They didn't stand up! They hung straight down! At first this didn't bother Leo at all. He thought and felt just like all the other rabbits. Eventually, the rest of the rabbits noticed that he was different—

That normal is whatever you are! This delightfully illustrated book from the Serendipity Series provides us with a great vehicle in helping gifted students understand and deal with the alienation that is sometimes caused by their giftedness. This wonderful little book has become a very important tool when I deal with the affective needs of gifted learners.

The Literary Program

These four pieces have been very helpful to me in my work with gifted students. I am sure that some of you have other favorites and stand-bys. Please share them with me and I will share them with our tempo readers. Happy reading, and I will be looking forward to hearing from you.

RESPONSE AND ANALYSIS:
TEACHING LITERATURE IN JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
By Robert E. Probst

Dr. Probst has provided educators of the gifted with an invaluable tool with this work. He has explored an approach to the study of literature which is not only highly appropriate for gifted learners but also an approach which is perhaps more legitimate than our past practices in high school literature classrooms.

Probst begins with two basic arguments: 1) Literature is experience; and 2) It is the interaction between reader and text that makes literature. He points out that the major problem of the secondary school English program is that we have not asked what we intend to accomplish in our literature programs and that "... we assume that the goals of the professional literary student are also the goals of the secondary school literature student." (p.6) We all know that this is not a safe assumption.

Relying heavily on the work of Louise Rosenblatt (Literature As Exploration, 1978), Probst builds a rationale and offers practical guidelines to lead us into Response-Based Teaching.

He builds on the premise "... that the literary experience is fundamentally an unmediated, private exchange between a text and a reader, and that literary history and scholarship are supplemental." (p.7) He then guides us by providing a discussion of various responses to several pieces of literature. He outlines the conditions for response-based teaching and provides some important guidelines to teachers to elicit responses from students. Chapter 2 reads very much like a strategy section from a textbook on teaching the gifted. The learner is at the center and she or he produces knowledge through an interaction with the text and personal experience. It becomes a matter of thinking carefully about the text and one's own experience in order to provide a well thought out response which the student can support.

The book is divided into three parts:
I: The Logic of Response-Based Teaching
II: The Literature
III: The Literary Program

These three parts provide a wealth of information both in theory and application. Chapter 5, "Adolescent Literature," alone is well worth the price of the book. The reference lists and the recommended book lists are a real find.

Teachers who want to provide a study of literature that is appropriate for gifted learners must place Response and Analysis on their resource book shelf.

Dr. Probst has restated the importance of literary study for us by placing the reader at the center of the literary experience "... thus redefining literature's place in culture. It [literature] becomes once again the possession of every man, rather than of the scholarly elite. ... It thus merits a place at the center of the curriculum, as the most fundamental and significant of all the disciplines. For it is in the study of literature that we each build the conceptual world in which we live." (p.253)

What more needs to be said?

Boynton/Cook Publishers, Heineman, Portsmouth, NH 03801
TAGT Introduces Five Regional Representatives

Region XI—Ann Brock

Ann, a member of the Finance Committee, has been a teacher in the Burleson g/t program for 10 years. She earned her undergraduate degree at Texas Tech and her MEd in g/t from Texas Woman’s University. She also has Mid-Management Certification as well as a g/t endorsement. She does local staff development in problem-solving and g/t and does presentations across the state. A native Texan, Ann is the sister to nine brothers. She has two Aggie sons and a newly acquired daughter (in-law).

Region XIII—Irene Helton

Irene is an assistant superintendent in Hays CISD. Having made a commitment to gifted education, she continues to serve as Director of the ALPHAH Program. Supported by the Hays Board of Education, she and a group of dedicated teachers and administrators pioneered a K-12 developmental program in 1979-80, after having been advised it was an impossible task for a small district with limited financial capability. The reward has been the opportunity over a long period of time to observe and facilitate identified gifted students’ progress toward their potential. Though involved in the development of several statewide programs, she has found the gifted program an especially rewarding and a very personal experience.

Region XV—Mary L. Seay

In gifted education since 1974, Mary has been a professor at Texas A&M University, Arkansas Tech University, and the University of New Orleans. Presently, Mary is the coordinator of gifted programs in San Angelo ISD. She has given presentations at national and international meetings and has numerous publications on aspects of gifted education and English. Dr. Seay also worked as a specialist in Region VI ESC. She was named Teacher of the Year by Delta Kappa Gamma International in 1989.

Mary is a member of Phi Delta Kappa, Delta Kappa Gamma, National Association of Gifted and Talented, American Creativity Association, Council on Exceptional Children, Texas Association for Gifted and Talented Children, and was Vice-President of the Louisiana Association for Gifted. She has also been a keynote speaker for the Connecticut Association for Gifted.

Region XVII—Mary Keller

Mary is currently Director of Elementary Education for Denver City ISD. She brings impressive and varied experience to her role as Regional Representative to the TAGT Executive Board including: a doctorate degree, District Officer (Third Vice President), Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; Vice President, West Texas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; Board of Directors, West Texas Association of Women School Executives; and Participant in TEPSA Academy and Texas LEAD Center.

Region XIX—Pat Panus

Pat administers the Gifted and Talented Program for Ysleta ISD in El Paso. A native of St. Louis and a graduate (M.A.) from St. Louis University, her experience as both principal and educator spans the elementary, high school, and college levels.

Pat has presented workshops at the TAGT State Conference, the NAGC National Conference, and the Texas Education Agency Conference. Locally, she enjoys presenting g/t informational seminars for parents and volunteers in the VISA program. Pat’s goal for the future includes weaving higher order thinking skills into a multicultural fabric for the children of El Paso.
State Board of Education
Rules for the Gifted and Talented

SBOE Rules for the Identification and Selection of Student Participants (To implement section 21.565 of the Texas Education Code) (19 TAC, 89.51):

(a) School districts shall develop written policies on student identification that are approved by the local board of trustees. These policies shall include a definition of gifted students that is compatible with the state definition included in TEC 21.561; provisions for ongoing screening and selection of nominated students based on a minimum of five equally weighted criteria that represent both objective and subjective assessments; provisions regarding the exiting of students from the program, transfer students, and appeals of district decisions regarding program placement.

(b) Final selection of students shall be made by a committee of at least three local school district educators who are familiar with identification procedures and are knowledgeable in the area of gifted education.

(c) Data and procedures used during the identification process shall be designed to assure that the population of the program for gifted students reflects the population of the total district.

(d) Students at the kindergarten level through grade 12 shall be identified and served. In addition to identified students, talent pools of potentially gifted students may be identified to receive instruction designed to enhance talent and divergent thinking skills.

(e) Once identified for a gifted program, the student shall not be reidentified in order to remain in the program. A student may be removed from the program by complying with local board approved exiting procedures.

(f) Participation in any program or service offered for gifted students is voluntary on the part of the students and requires written permission of their parents or legal guardians.

"A school district or a combination of school districts shall submit the program for approval to the Central Education Agency in accordance with rules adopted by the State Board of Education. The agency shall approve any program that satisfies requirements for a program established by board rule. The requirements established by the board must consider unique local needs of school districts and must allow school districts to develop and implement alternatives that provide a high level of services but are appropriate to local needs."

SBOE Rules for the Implementation of Programs to Serve Identified Gifted and Talented Students (Texas Education Code, 21.564) (19 TAC, 89.52):

(a) Districts shall:
   (1) develop and obtain local board of trustee approval for an identification procedure that complies with the Texas Administrative Code 89.51.
   (2) provide a minimum of 30 hours of staff development for teachers of the gifted prior to assignment in the program for gifted students. Additional training should be provided as needed.
   (3) provide ongoing training in gifted education for district staff based on periodic needs assessment.
   (4) develop curriculum specifically designed for gifted and talented students that includes student objectives and a kindergarten through 12 scope and sequence.
   (5) provide a full year program that includes instructional and organizational patterns that enable identified students to work together as a group, to work with other students, and to work alone.
   (6) provide orientation and periodic updates for parents of students identified and served as gifted.

(b) To be eligible for approval for funding, districts must submit program information on forms developed and provided by the commissioner of education.

(c) Districts shall maintain their eligibility for continuation of funding by submitting planning or evaluation reports to the Central Education Agency periodically as required by the commissioner of education.

(d) Districts with limited numbers of gifted and talented students are encouraged to establish cooperatives. Combinations of districts that apply for state funding shall select a fiscal agent to manage the program. Education service centers may act as fiscal/management agents for districts in their regions.

News You Can Use

Pen Pals from the Soviet Union
Be matched (by age and interests) to a student in the Soviet Union. Write (and receive!) about six letters per year. For more information (no obligation, no follow-up) write for the free packet and application form to: Pen Pal Planet P.O. Box 3657 Scranton, PA 18505-0657

A Magazine for Talented Math and Science Students
Quantum, a New Quarterly Magazine of Mathematics and Science for Talented High School Students. (Recommended by SMPY at JHU.) Includes information about competitions, summer institutes; diverse and challenging math and physics problems; informative articles, lab experiments, brain teasers, and mathematical oddities. $14 per year. For subscription information, write: Quantum 1742 Connecticut Ave., NW Washington, D.C. 20009

New Study Available on GT Math Students
SMPY Research: Mathematics Acceleration
For a copy of this research report you may contact: SMPY at JHU (Study of Mathematically Precocious Youth at Johns Hopkins University) 430 Gilman Hall Johns Hopkins University Baltimore, MD 21218 301/338-7087

More Good Reading
Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman and What Do You Care What Other People Think? by Nobel Prize winner Richard Feynman. Collection of stories about his life; offers insight into the creative process of an extraordinary scientist through an entertaining chronicle of the experiences and amusing stories. (Recommended by SMPY at JHU.)
TAGT Board Votes to Form Coordinators' Division

This spring, the TAGT Board investigated the possibility of allowing subgroups within the organization to become formal Divisions. The Long Range Planning Committee and an ad hoc Steering Committee have been working to provide structure to the idea.

As a result of this work, the first TAGT Division will recruit its membership this summer and hold its first formal meeting for the membership during TAGT's Fall Conference. The first Division will be one for people who coordinate or administer gifted programs in the state. Designated as the Coordinators' Division, the group will seek to provide support for those who fulfill an administrative role no matter what their formal title.

The need for a Coordinators' Division was identified through a mailing to all coordinators in the State. More than 250 responses were received applauding the move. Areas of need established through the coordinators' responses and the first meeting of the Steering Committee included:

- specific information on implementing the state mandate (providing a newsletter that addresses specific coordinators' concerns)
- networks or cluster groups for coordinators in small districts
- information on how to be an effective coordinator
- information directed to coordinators on meetings, SBOE rule changes, etc.
- effective support.

The Steering Committee met for a second time on May 31, 1991. At that meeting, they wrote proposed bylaws, set a meeting schedule for 1991-92, discussed topics for programs, and outlined the initial meeting. The organizational meeting is scheduled for the Fall Conference, Thursday, November 21 from 7:30 to 10:30 am. It will be a breakfast meeting and will feature a speaker addressing the state of gifted education in Texas from the coordinator's perspective and a panel of experienced coordinators answering questions from the audience. A business meeting which sets up the organization of the Division will also be held at that time.

A second meeting is scheduled for the evening of April 30, 1992, and all day on May 1 at the Radisson Hotel in Austin. A major focus at that time will be the meeting of job-alike groups which will provide an opportunity for networking.

In addition to the meetings, the Division plans to have a newsletter, regular articles in tempo, and a buddy system which pairs inexperienced with experienced coordinators. If you are interested in joining the Division, complete and return to the TAGT office the membership form in this issue. If you want more information on the Division or have suggestions for the organization, call Peggy Kress, TAGT Immediate Past President, during the day at 409/760-7723 or in the evenings at 713/367-8655.

Speakers Needed!

Does your organization need a speaker for a meeting, seminar, or workshop? Call the TAGT office for the names of speakers who fit your needs. TAGT does not endorse any one presenter, but we will send you references for you to contact to help you make your choice.

Are you knowledgeable about some aspect of gifted education? Did you organize a successful parent affiliate group? Did you have a dynamite idea for a project or activity that you successfully executed? SHARE your expertise! Register with the updated TAGT Speakers Bureau Talent Bank: Call, mail, or fax the following data to the TAGT office:

Name, Address, Phone number(s), ESC Region, Position, Area(s) of expertise, Fee or expenses (if any; e.g., printing, travel), Names of three references, Experience (recent presentation, project, activity)

Remember, "experts" don't always have doctorates and a long list of publications. YOUR knowledge and experience are valuable and should be shared.

TAGT Survey: Membership Needs

The TAGT Executive Board wishes to provide those services desired by the membership as we look to the future of our organization. The Membership Development and Services Committee is conducting a survey of our membership in order to determine the needs and priorities for membership services. This survey will be mailed to all members the week of August 5. Please make a special effort to complete the survey and return it to the TAGT office by August 23. Thank you in advance for sharing your insight.

Ann Trull, Second Vice-President and Chairperson, Membership Development and Services Committee
The Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented
and the
Texas Education Agency
are co-sponsoring
a one-day drive-in conference for parents

**August 10, 1991**
Hyatt Regency Austin

**Conference Schedule**

- 8:00 - 9:00 Registration, Coffee and Conversation
- 9:00 - 10:30 General Session—Keynote Speaker
- 10:45 - 12:00 Breakout Sessions
- 12:00 - 1:30 Lunch and Speaker
- 1:45 - 3:00 Repeat Breakout Sessions
- 3:15 - 4:30 Closing Session

**Special Features**

- Tour of The White House, a residence for women
- Information Browsing Booths

**Keynote Speaker**

Dr. Joyce Jontune
American Creativity Center

**Invited Speakers**

Dr. Lionel (Skip) Meno
Commissioner of Education

Dr. Jay Cummings
Deputy Commissioner for Special Programs, TEA

**Prescription for Success:**

**Parenting the Gifted**

Name(s) ___________________________

Mailing Address ___________________________

City ___________________________ State ______ ZIP ______

Day Phone ___________________________

Number of persons attending at $20 each ______

Mail to:

TAGT
PO Box 9802, #814
Austin, TX 78766

The $20 registration fee includes handout materials, refreshment break, and luncheon. Accommodations are available at the Hyatt at $55 for a single room. Call (512) 477-1234 to reserve. The deadline for registration is Friday, July 26, 1991.

For more information, contact:
Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented (512) 343-1686 or
Division of Gifted/Talented, Texas Education Agency (512) 468-9455
Universities Collaborate To Create Programs For The Gifted And Talented

Dr. Patricia Haenaly, Texas A&M University

COLLABORATION seems to be the key word in the call for action that we are experiencing in almost every area of education. As representatives of universities in Texas offering teacher endorsement programs in gifted and talented education met last September, we defined ourselves as "a collaboration among universities providing such programs." We also determined that it was imperative that the network we formed seek linkage with the foremost advocates of gifted education in this state, the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented and the Gifted and Talented Office of the Texas Education Agency. Our collaboration with these agencies will enable us to serve more effectively the gifted children of Texas. The contribution to collaboration that universities might best make is through research which is linked to teachers and other school practitioners and through teacher education (the endorsement programs).

I recently attended a conference in Washington, D.C. on New Directions in Child and Family Research: Shaping Head Start in the '90s. The overarching focus of this conference was to bring the education and research arms of universities into collaboration with the practitioners of Head Start. The research and practitioner papers and poster sessions presented not just material relevant to Head Start, but a fascinating array of ideas central to what we have tried to accomplish in gifted education, such as metacognitive strategies, collaborating with parents and with the business sector, and alternatives to traditional assessment. Our own association at Texas A&M with Head Start has been as important an avenue for early identification of gifted potential in culturally diverse and economically disadvantaged bright children. We are finding ways to ensure that these young bright children make the transition into the public school system successfully so that their giftedness will find appropriate support and development.

Conference participants also heard John MacDonald, Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, vehemently emphasize collaboration between the various agencies of the government providing services to children, youth, and families (including the Department of Education). He described the ridiculous situations that have arisen as agencies sought to be territorial or "turf-centered," and how destructive this approach has been for children. He stated that early childhood expertise must inform elementary practice because the latter has not been user-friendly for those young children. Radical ideas? Conference participants were greatly encouraged to hear him espouse the interactive instructional practices which we in gifted education have long been insisting are optimal for learning. MacDonald said, "Learning occurs as children interact with people, with adults and other children; it does not come from taking tests."

But what does this all have to do with gifted education and with TAGT? I believe it has much to do with it. We have begun to realize more and more that we have been leaders in a renovation of the educational system. What we have been advocating as effective instruction for gifted children and youth is at the heart of what great pedagogy and instructional excellence are for all children.

This became especially evident at a recent conference at Texas A&M University, Henry Levin of Stanford University was invited to discuss his unique and successful "Accelerated Learning" approach to teaching at-risk students. Levin described the rationale for this approach, now being piloted in a number of schools across the nation, as taking on the attitudes of educators of the gifted, such as CHALLENGE and HIGH EXPECTATIONS and DIVERSE INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS. The approach he outlined stems from the philosophy of educators of the gifted who have understood with great clarity that we maximize gifted potential:

- only when students' strengths rather than weaknesses are recognized and used as the focal point of instruction ("front-loaded," as Sec'y John MacDonald called it)
- only when learning is permitted to proceed at a pace appropriate to the individual student.

Levin stated that instead of slowing down "at-risk students" it is imperative that we pace instruction to meet their needs—"don't remediate; accelerate!" Will it work for at-risk students? We will see. It certainly isn't the familiar Julian Stanley acceleration. However, the possibilities for moving students along more quickly with meaningful learning related to real experiences, rather than the drill-and-spill, or ram-end-regurgitation of unconnected information endlessly repeated in order to perform on fact-based tests have been recognized. Besides that, many of those at-risk students are the gifted students who have previously fallen through our gifted identification system cracks.

These are exciting times in education. Will we in gifted education take seriously our role as leaders and continuing innovators for facilitating the best of abilities in all children and youth? We must not only improve our identification of giftedness, but we must also let what we do in the classroom spill over and affect the learning of all children, those for whom the access to "gifted education" has not yet occurred but whose potential is waiting to be cultivated. It seems more critical than ever that we in the University Network expand our research and support to collaborate more effectively with teachers, coordinators, service centers, parents, TAGT and other support groups for gifted education.

The upcoming conference on Changing Demographics in Gifted Education, to be hosted by the University of Texas Pan American in Edinburg in September, is one opportunity for us to further this collaboration. Dr. Mary Kolesniski, Dr. Ernesto Bernal, Dr. Dorothy Sisk, Dr. Pamela Gilbert are all to be congratulated for their work in bringing this collaborative effort to reality!
CALL FOR ARTICLES

Fall '91
Search for Excellence

The theme for the Fall issue of tempo reflects the theme chosen for our annual conference. We would like to set the tone for the conference in our Search For Excellence in Gifted Education.

In this issue, we are looking for articles which reflect the ways that gifted education is providing outstanding service for our gifted learners. We are looking for articles which report on exemplary programs and outstanding achievements of gifted students. We would also like to provide a forum for challenges for gifted education, goals for gifted education, and suggestions for program improvement. This theme allows for a wide scope of article content. The Fall issue is a good opportunity for writers who are looking for an opportunity to share a philosophical approach to gifted education.

Guidelines for article submissions

1. Address the article to the theme of an upcoming issue or to a regular feature.

2. Submissions should be typed, double-spaced, 50 characters per line, 25 lines per page. A word limit of 250-350 words is encouraged. Please consider our space and reproduction limitations. Please send a computer disk (either IBM, DOS or ASCII text file if possible, or Mac; please indicate software used).

3. Include your name, position/role, region, address, and daytime telephone number.

Send all submissions to:
TAGT tempo
P.O. Box 9802 #914
Austin, TX 78766-9802

The deadline for receipt of articles is August 15, 1991.

Winter '92
Gifted Females

One of the major concerns and issues in gifted education is the gifted female. Are we adequately identifying the gifted female? Are we providing appropriate programming for the gifted female? Are we addressing cultural concerns in reference to the gifted female?

The 1992 Winter issue of tempo will focus on this important issue. Articles may focus on academic research that identifies needs of gifted females as well as practical experience that deals with these issues. We are especially interested in articles on any Texas program or project that deals with the gifted female. We are also interested in articles on classroom activities that highlight the needs of the gifted female. Please note the format requirements listed below.

The deadline for receipt of articles is December 1, 1991.
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