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The gifted/learning disabled student: A contradiction in the classroom

Abstract

The following study is a review of current literature concerning identification processes, as well as a delineation of appropriate learning strategies for gifted/learning disabled students. The analysis continues with an examination of the needs of a potentially gifted/learning disabled student. Throughout his academic career, the subject of this analysis experienced difficulties in school. Despite his high intelligence, he did not achieve academically according to either grade level testing or batteries measuring personal aptitude. The resulting combination of the review of literature and the student analysis produces, from the viewpoint of best recommended practice, suggested strategies for educators teaching paradoxical learners. Finally, this paper proposes recommendations and implications for future research in the area of gifted/learning disabled individuals.

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THE GIFTED/LEARNING DISABLED STUDENT: A CONTRADICTION IN THE CLASSROOM

A Graduate Project
Submitted to the
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Education

Caroline M. Bredekamp
University of Northern Iowa
July, 1993

Research Paper Compiled By: Caroline M. Bredekamp

Entitled: The Gifted/Learning Disabled Student: A Contradiction in the Classroom

has been approved as meeting the research paper requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Education.

July 20, 1993
Date Approved

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Date Approved

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Abstract

The following study is a review of current literature concerning identification processes, as well as a delineation of appropriate learning strategies for gifted/learning disabled students. The analysis continues with an examination of the needs of a potentially gifted/learning disabled student. Throughout his academic career, the subject of this analysis experienced difficulties in school. Despite his high intelligence, he did not achieve academically according to either grade level testing or batteries measuring personal aptitude. The resulting combination of the review of literature and the student analysis produces, from the viewpoint of best recommended practice, suggested strategies for educators teaching paradoxical learners. Finally, this paper proposes recommendations and implications for future research in the area of gifted/learning disabled individuals.

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"Education is a social process...

Education is growth...

Education is not preparation for life;

Education is life itself."

John Dewey

Chapter I

Explanation of the Problem

Background and Need for This Study

Some of the smartest children in today's schools are not making the grade. It is frustrating because many of them have average to above average intelligence levels. Yet many never reach their full potential because their problems are overlooked or misunderstood--and adequate services are often unavailable.

That problem is a learning disability. A handicap that touches over 10 million children nationwide. It affects their ability to read, write, speak, or compute math. When a learning disability goes untreated, children lose self-esteem and often suffer serious consequences as a result. (National Center for Learning Disabilities, 1992)

"It has been estimated...that approximately 3 percent of the school population can be classified as gifted. And, further, that about 5 to 8 percent of this number suffer from some type of learning disability" (Humphrey, 1990, p. v). Tannenbaum and Baldwin (Fox, Brody, and Tobin, 1983) contend that gifted students and learning disabled students are commonly regarded as separate populations and that few people pay attention to students in both groups. "Educators are often so preoccupied with a child's failures, they simply do not look for sparks of extraordinary potential" (p. 12).

A Paradox in the Classroom

In 1983, Tannenbaum (Silverman, 1989) identified gifted/learning disabled children as "paradoxical learners" (p. 39), since these students often fail easier test items and pass more difficult items. Dixon (1983) noted another paradox that exists in this population: it appears that they often suddenly blossom during puberty, getting brighter with age. Silverman (1989) surveyed parents of students similar to those in Dixon's study to see if they considered

their children to be late bloomers. The students reported higher performance in high school than either elementary school or junior high. Of these same students who attended college, there was even greater academic success in post-secondary education than in high school. "The late blooming phenomenon seems to be holding up in these interviews, although there is not consistency about the age of blooming..." (p. 39).

Ambiguity of Terms

Most parents and educators do not understand clearly enough the nature of the terms "giftedness" and "learning disabled". Herein lies the problem of the apparent paradox of gifted/learning disabled students. As educators measure the achievements of these children, their strengths and deficits effectively cancel out each other when scores are compiled. Gifts and handicaps existing in one individual often mask each other, and that child consequently appears to be an average (regular) student or an underachiever. (Silverman, 1989). People unfamiliar with learning processes often misjudge these students. As a result, children are often blamed for having bad attitudes or

not trying hard enough (Barton and Starnes, 1989).

Gifted/learning disabled children and their unique problems are ignored all too often in our educational system; they are prevented by school policies and state guidelines from participing in either gifted or learning disabled programs. In reality, these students need to have special attention given to both their giftedness and their learning disabilities. The result is that many gifted/learning disabled students are overlooked in our educational system, and consequently, they are one of the most underserved populations in our schools (Landrum, 1989).

Purpose of This Study

The purpose of this study was threefold:

1. To review the current literature concerning identification processes as well as the delineation of appropriate learning strategies as related to gifted/learning disabled students.

2. To present a portrait of a potentially gifted/learning disabled student, a 17-year-old male who, despite being tested as highly intelligent, was

and is now performing significantly below grade level and below his personal potential.

3. To examine the portrait from the viewpoint of recommended best practice, suggesting strategies for educators teaching paradoxical learners.

Operational Definitions for This Study

Gifted and Talented (Code of Iowa, 1989)

> "Gifted and talented children" are those identified as possessing outstanding abilities who are capable of high performance. Gifted and talented children are children who require appropriate instruction and educational services commensurate with their abilities and needs beyond those provided by the regular school program... Gifted and talented children include those children with demonstrated achievement or potential ability, or both, in any of the following areas or in combination: (a) General intellectual ability, (b) creative thinking, (c) leadership ability, (d) visual and performing arts ability, (e) specific ability aptitude. (Code 602.7)

Learning Disability (Public Law 94-142, 1975)

> "Specific learning disability" means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual/hearing/motor handicaps, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

Gifted/Learning Disabled (Baum, 1989)

> [Students with giftedness and learning disabilities] "...exhibit remarkable talents and strengths in some areas and disabling weaknesses in others. They can be found in three general varieties: (a) identified gifted students who have subtle learning disabilities, (b)

unidentified students whose gifts and disabilities may be masked by average achievement, and (c) identified learning disabled students who are also gifted" (p. 11).

Delimitations of This Study

Research Limits on Emphasis

In order to gather support for the inclusion of gifted/learning disabled students in gifted programs, research was structured around a review of literature by specialists in the field of talented and gifted education. To a lesser degree, research included the views of professionals in the field of learning disabled education.

Research was structured around literature with insights in the areas of identification and inclusion, specific student characteristics, attitudes and behaviors, programs, and evaluation.

Research Limits on Literature

In an attempt to better understand current trends in this field of education, research was limited to a review of available publications from 1980-1992.

Literature was gathered at the Donald O. Rod Library, University of Northern Iowa. Searches were conducted through UNISTAR and CD-ROM databases, the inter-library loan system, as well as through manual methods.

Research Limits on Analysis

In an attempt to deepen (rather than broaden) the scope of the analysis, research was limited to one subject. It is recognized that a single case does not always represent an entire group.

Data was gathered from personal interviews with the subject, the subject's parents, school officials and instructors, from complete school records and transcripts, and from Area Education Agency Files.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

This literature review is a compilation of insights found in written materials related to gifted/learning disabled students. It begins with an examination of current trends for the processes of identification and inclusion, selection, and participation in special education programs for gifted/learning disabled students. Second, profiles of characteristics of children with identified special needs, including giftedness/learning disability, are presented, and the need to be mindful of these characteristics as warning signs for all students is emphasized. Third, it presents suggested placements and discusses the ways in which gifted/learning disabled students can be served in various classroom settings. The literature review is concluded with an examination of educational strategies based on the need for proper evaluation of gifted/learning disabled

students, comprehensive follow-up with these students after placements are made, and suggestions for daily practice in different classroom settings.

Current Trends for Identification and Inclusion

An examination of the operational definitions in Chapter I reveals the concept that a student can be both gifted and learning disabled by virtue of his/her strengths and weaknesses. Gifted/learning disabled students are fortunate that the federal definitions of "giftedness" and "learning disabled" are liberal. The Iowa Code does not assume that a gifted child has both high achievement and high potential, nor does PL 94-142 assume that a learning disabled child has deficits in every area of basic skills. Maker (1977) holds that a person who is handicapped and gifted "simply has both strengths and weaknesses that are very pronounced" (Fox, Brody, and Tobin, 1983).

In addition to children whose gifts and deficits are readily identified, it is possible that a large portion of "regular" children in our classrooms who are functioning at or below grade level have some learning disabilities that prevent them from developing their personal potential. Whether or not students are

classified as gifted/learning disabled, teachers must become skilled at not only recognizing these students but also at accommodating curriculum to their unique needs (Landrum, 1989).

Given that students with both gifts and deficits are present in the classroom setting, educators must begin to incorporate gifted/learning disabled programs into our schools. According to Fox, Brody, and Tobin (1983), good gifted/learning disabled programs depend on identifying students eligible for participation in such programs. The identification process is hindered when educators do not have operational, professional, and, in some cases, even legal definitions for the terms used in this process.

A disparity exists in the minds of educators in the area of gifted education who expect students to score high in all areas of standardized tests. With this disparity, there is confusion as to whether students with high overall achievement and deficit area(s) are qualified for gifted programs. In reality, only a small portion of gifted/learning disabled students are ever identified as members of either group. It appears, however, that more often, students

with both gifts and deficits are assessed and placed in programs according to their weaknesses. The implied result is a lack of resources and services for this population. A more discrete definition of "gifted/learning disabled", and a more consistent interpretation of this definition, would lay a more solid foundation for appropriate identification and inclusion techniques, and would lead to better placement of students in these programs.

Identification

Fox, Brody, and Tobin (1983) hold that, since few children are being identified as gifted/learning disabled at the present time, we must place more effort in determining a percentage of such students in the school population. This is likely to require more intensive research and more standardized identification methods in clinical practice than our educational system has ever seen.

The very nature of screening processes for both gifted and learning disabled students makes identifying the gifted/learning disabled especially difficult, and consequently, many students who have pronounced

strengths and weaknesses are completely overlooked. According to Gunderson, Maesch, and Rees (1987, p.159), the gifted/learning disabled students "who are missed by normal identification procedures can be categorized into two major groups. The first group includes students who are not referred by the classroom teacher for individual study but probably should be.... The second group of students often missed is the group of bright learning disabled students who are already receiving learning disabled services but no gifted services." This implies that educators must make themselves increasingly aware of the common characteristics of learning disabled and gifted students.

The gifted/learning disabled child should be identified early in his/her school experience, preferably no later than kindergarten or first grade (Humphrey, 1990). However, early identification is not exact. Gifted/learning disabled students are extremely difficult to identify with the traditional procedures now used in schools in the United States. For example, an estimated 70% of gifted individuals may not be identified if group administered tests are used as the

only method of identification because such children perform poorly on group tests. This is the case particularly for students with deficiencies in the areas of visual perception and comprehension (Humphrey, 1990).

Inclusion

Criteria for inclusion have a significant impact on students who need special programs to be successful in the classroom, for these criteria define the way in which students are considered for and selected to participate in such programs. Fox, Brody, and Tobin (1983) feel that the instruments used for screening students should be liberal in the early stages of inclusion, even if they indicate unrealistic and remote potential. The reason for using this approach to inclusion is to avoid immediately ruling out the possibility that a student may need special programming. This can be accomplished by including students who show only vague hints of giftedness or deficits and determining later whether or not exceptionalities actually exist with more discriminating indicators. Criteria for inclusion,

then, can be seen as a funnelling technique by which many students are considered for a special education program at first and are eliminated slowly until a select population is revealed.

> The selection of instruments and procedures [used as criteria for identification and inclusion] has to be determined by the scope and objectives of the curriculum. In order to obtain the proper kinds of information, it is necessary to examine multiple sources, including, but not limited to: (a) Teacher observations..., (b) parental reports..., (c) evidence of general ability..., (d) evidence from "creativity" measures..., (e) evidence of non-cognitive traits..., and (f) evidence of productivity or performance (Fox, Brody, and Tobin, 1983, pp. 25-31).

Student Characteristics

In meeting the challenge of educating gifted/learning disabled students, educators on both ends of the exceptionality spectrum need to be knowledgeable of the characteristics of both gifted students and

learning disabled students, as do educators of regular children. Recognizing the gifted/learning disabled child is not an easy task. Educators should acquire a greater awareness of needs and a greater ability to diagnose strengths and weaknesses.

Many authors have compiled characteristic profiles for different kinds of students. The delineations are composed of characteristics shared by children who have been diagnosed as to their respective exceptionalities. A working awareness of the characteristics of special needs students is a valuable tool for the educator of children with undiagnosed difficulties. Teachers, particularly regular education teachers in the lower elementary grades, need in-service training. They will then become aware of certain warning signs displayed in behavior and academic performance. As a consequence, the training will assist them in assessing students' abilities and placing them in appropriate special education programs.

More comprehensive profiles of gifted, learning disabled, and gifted/learning disabled students are found in Appendix B. Brief summaries of these authors' findings are included here.

Characteristics of the Gifted

Feldhusen, Van Tassel-Baska, and Seeley (1989) discuss the characteristics of gifted students in terms of affective and cognitive traits. These authors hold that the gifted student has a strong, multi-faceted personality with intense levels of emotion and perception, especially with regard to the affective components of the student's personality.

Ehrlich (cited in Humphrey, 1990) gives suggestions for recognizing gifted individuals who may have been overlooked. Ehrlich recommends that instructors look not only at the known positive traits of giftedness, but also consider clues hidden in negative characteristics. Students displaying negative characteristics are often judged by adults as being lazy. Silverman (1989, p. 37) suggests that educators should ask, "...when we are looking at a student who won't do the work, how do we know we aren't actually seeing a child who can't do the work?"

Characteristics of the Learning Disabled

Humphrey (1990) provides the reader with a profile of learning disabled students. This profile includes

such deficits as motor difficulties, low academic ability, and behavior problems.

Characteristics of the Gifted/Learning Disabled

Cordell and Cannon (1985) have developed a delineation of the gifted/learning disabled student which is defined by discrepancies between testing results, aptitude, and physical, emotional, and behavioral problems.

Udall (1985) offers a collection of traits that tend to describe the gifted/learning disabled student in terms of levels of cognitive, reasoning, creative, and motor, and social skills.

To date, it appears that the vast majority of gifted/learning disabled students have been found among underachievers. According to Silverman (1989), Whitmore was able to compile lists of characteristics for both the underachieving gifted child and the gifted/learning disabled child, and found that the two were identical in nature (Whitmore and Maker, 1985).

Dominant patterns of strengths and weaknesses in each gifted student with specific learning disabilities have been observed. Moller (1984) suggests that once a

gifted/learning disabled child has been identified and his/her strengths and weaknesses have been confirmed, a program must be developed which works according to the student's strengths and which also strives to improve weaknesses whenever possible.

Summary

The literature seems to indicate that the most effective strategy for identifying exceptional students is for all educators, particularly those in lower elementary regular classrooms, to have the ability to recognize positive and negative characteristics, as well as strengths and weaknesses, in children and to associate observations with potential special needs situations.

Suggested Placements

After gifted/learning disabled students have been identified, one problem remains: how to serve them by proper placement. Although it is valuable to have some general knowledge about students' disabilities, it is more important to know how the disabilities affect a particular child. Furthermore, "teachers must remain

open to the possibility that gifted and learning disabled students--regardless of identification--may be served in a variety of settings" (Landrum, 1989, p. 533).

When deciding on the placement which best suits the needs of a particular gifted/learning disabled student, educators must consider the placement arrangements already in existence. Because of the small number of gifted/learning disabled students in each school population and the limited funding available, separate programs will not likely evolve, so attention should be shifted to the settings in which the students are currently placed and how to adequately meet their needs.

The following section informs educators of techniques that can be used in different learning environments. It also suggests ways to make each type of classroom more supportive of the needs of the gifted/learning disabled student.

Landrum (1989) gives suggestions for regular and special education professionals according to each classroom setting:

Talented and Gifted Classroom

1. Do not expect or require talented and gifted students to be superior in all areas.

2. Design enrichment materials to work around a student's weakness area. Provide students with alternative materials for the gathering of information.

3. Gifted/learning disabled students may experience great frustration in dealing with their extreme discrepancies. Be sensitive to the emotional and social needs of students and their self-esteems.

Learning Disabled Classroom

1. Remediation should be the priority in the LD classroom but not the only concern; areas of strengths should also be addressed.

2. A student's cognition, problem-solving ability, and reasoning skills should be considered in addition to his/her reading ability when assessing student potential.

3. LD teachers need to be aware of possible characteristics of giftedness.

Regular Classroom

1. Regular classroom teachers may have the most difficult task because of the diverse range of abilities and personalities found in the regular classroom. The primary responsibility for the regular classroom teacher is to be aware of the possibility of having a student in the classroom who is both gifted and learning disabled.

2. Discrepancies may appear in a student's performance so a regular classroom teacher should be sensitive to these as they occur.

3. Do not assume that a strength in one area carries over to all areas in that same subject.

4. Mild behavior problems, lack of motivation, and difficulties following directions may occur because of varied performances of the gifted/learning disabled student.

Summary

Given the financial situation of most school systems and the lack of expertise on the part of educators regarding the gifted/learning disabled population, it is unrealistic to expect that the ideal

environment can be created for these children in the form of an entirely separate classroom. However, it is possible and essential to integrate the gifted/learning disabled child into existing classroom environments. This depends entirely on the teacher's sensitivity to the student's individual needs and by either meeting those needs directly or by seeing that they are met through participation in pullout programs or team teaching efforts.

Success in the Classroom

Once a child has been assigned to a particular classroom for gifted/learning disabled services, the child must be monitored to be certain that the chosen classroom setting and the curriculum applied are indeed the right combination for that individual. It can be noted that if these suggestions are applied and the gifted/learning disabled child still does not succeed, then perhaps a different approach to the problem is needed. This may mean either a change in the classroom setting or a change in the curriculum, or both. The following thoughts on success in the classroom suggest ways to encourage the gifted/learning disabled student

in his or her assigned learning environment.

Cordell and Cannon (1985) give classroom strategies which can help gifted/learning disabled students overcome difficulties and achieve academic success. They point out, first of all, that class sizes should be kept small. They also cite the need to provide a varying testing methods for assessment and individualized programs. A comfortable and supportive environment should also be provided. Finally, they suggest to "teach through strongest modalities, eliminate letter grades, encourage the use of problem-solving activities, use mentors, provide enrichment alternatives along with remediation, and provide time for social skills development."

Moller (1984) also recommends techniques for the success of gifted/learning disabled students. Much recognition for and encouragement in strong areas must be given, so that students can succeed often and thereby increase self-esteem. Pressures of trying harder must be minimized by providing individualized instruction in deficit areas. Provide students with information about famous individuals who were successful, despite their paradoxical learning style.

Length of homework and classwork assignments should be adjusted to the students' individual capabilities. Educators should explore more diverse ways of relaying information in lessons by varying the learning strategies used. Allow students to encourage and assist each other in their projects, in order to maximize awareness of the tutor's strengths and provide even more teaching strategies to peers. Their final strategy is encouraging parents and teachers to appreciate their students' capabilities.

Whitmore (1980, pp. 399,400) offers "...six principal techniques by which a teacher can specifically help gifted underachievers, in either a regular or a special classroom. The techniques generally increase motivation and achievement for high-achieving gifted students..." and could possibly assist gifted/learning disabled students as well:

1. Reduce external pressures on the child as much as possible by eliminating grades, emphasizing cooperative learning, and removing social penalties.

2. Seek to understand the motivational makeup of the child and capitalize upon pairing

strengths with weaknesses, likes with dislikes, and so on.

3. Maximize flexibility, alternatives, student choices, and opportunities for self-evaluation.

4. Intentionally develop the social skills and values of the child to prepare him/her for effective citizenship and possible leadership roles.

5. Build success and meaningful rewards for effort; identify with the child's small steps and short-term goals. Be certain that each child is ready for the learning activity planned so that success occurs.

6. Develop in students a rational understanding of the problems or limitations with which they must deal.

All of these scholars seem to emphasize three factors which must be addressed when educating gifted/learning disabled students. First, it is important to treat students as individually as possible, especially in the areas of recognizing and

respecting strengths and weaknesses. Related to this, educators need to create in each child a sense of this uniqueness which makes him/her feel special in a positive way. Finally, they all emphasize that this population benefits more from a classroom in which educators remove the competitiveness of students against each other and the conformity of students to each other.

Summary

If the program elements and teaching techniques discussed in this section are present in our classrooms, the chances are greater that gifted children will respond favorably and achieve commensurate with their ability. However, it must be noted that in regular classrooms certain problems inevitably remain, such as harmful comparisons of underachievers with high-achieving classmates and similar comparisons between gifted and non-gifted students. The characteristics of the peer group and the teacher are important to the success of any program. (Whitmore, 1980)

"Instead of allowing learning disabled/gifted children to fall through the cracks, it is time to begin looking under the floorboards and providing the types of interventions sorely needed for this population" (Silverman, 1989, p. 42). Essentially, learning disabilities must be dealt with if giftedness is ever to be of value to children as they learn and assume adult roles. Many remedial programs for learning disabled students, however, actually cause the gifts in these students to suffer rather than prosper. Therefore, it is important to note what basic modifications of learning disability programs must be made to accommodate the needs of the gifted children. Conversely, gifted programs should undergo similar modifications to accommodate the needs of the gifted/learning disabled students in its population.

Chapter III

A Portrait of a Paradoxical Learner

The following narrative provides a medical, social, emotional, and academic overview of the life of a potential gifted/learning disabled student. Preston is a 17-year-old Caucasian male who, despite being tested as highly intelligent, was and is now significantly performing below grade level and his own potential ability.

Preston was selected for this portrait for two reasons. First, he exhibits a variety of positive and negative school behaviors. Second, based on discrepancies between academic potential and actual achievement, he could conceivably qualify for both gifted and learning disabled services.

Information for the following portrait was obtained from the following sources: (a) Personal interviews with the subject, the subject's parents, school officials and instructors; (b) complete school

records and transcripts; (c) school medical records; and (d) Area Education Agency files.

Medical History

The following synopsis of Preston's medical history includes family health risks, health during the natal stages, and Preston's growth and development.

Family Health History

Maternal side. Preston's mother is adopted. Her biological family has a history of heart and respiratory disease. She has been treated for alcoholism.

Paternal side. Preston's father's family has a history of cancer, heart disease, and enuresis, cataracts, glaucoma, and the need for corrective lenses. Preston's father has had bone cancer for the past five years, and as a result, has had his leg amputated and a lung removed. Chemotherapy appears to have stopped the progress of the cancer.

Personal Health History

Prenatal health. Preston's mother experienced

nausea and vomiting for the first 5 months of pregnancy. Under her physician's care, she took Dramamine, a motion sickness medicine, to minimize this problem. During the pregnancy, she did not smoke or use alcohol. She gained 19 pounds while carrying the baby.

Perinatal health. Preston's mother went into labor after 8 1/2 months of pregnancy. Labor was relatively short and a saddle block was used during the delivery. She has stated that nothing unusual occurred during the delivery.

Neonatal health. At birth, Preston weighed 6 pounds, 7 1/2 ounces and was 20 1/4 inches in length. During the hospital stay, he was slightly jaundiced.

Early growth and development. Preston was bottle fed for approximately 2 years and tolerated food well after that time. He rolled over at 2 months, sat up at 5 months, crawled at 6 months, and walked at 9 months. Preston talked by the age of 1 1/2 years. He was toilet trained at the age of 2 years but regressed for about 1 month when his brother was born. He showed the first signs of being right-handed at the age of 3 years. Preston tied his shoes and could button and zip

his clothes by the age of 4 years. He had chicken pox before entering school at the age of 5 years.

Additionally, Preston's weight and height have always been within normal ranges. He has had regular vision, dental, and hearing exams throughout his life, and all of these reports appear to fall in normal ranges as well. Preston received a complete series of childhood immunizations.

School-age health. Preston suffered from regular enuresis (bed-wetting) until the age of 14 years. He did not experience any other sleeping problems with this condition. He still reports no sleeping difficulties. He has a good appetite. Preston had tendinitis of the right foot from a puncture wound at the age of 15 years. He had an emergency appendectomy when he was 10 years old.

During his junior high and high school years, Preston experienced physical signs of stress, including stomachaches and headaches correlating with frustration regarding school and academics. He has been taking Tagamet for an ulcer condition since the age of 16 years.

Social History

The following section is a survey of Preston's relationships with others including family members, elders and other authority figures, and peers, as well as an examination of Preston's employment and recreational activities.

Family Life

Preston currently lives with both parents and his younger brother on a farm located near most of his extended family. His six grandparents are all living, as well as one great-grandmother, and Preston's relationships with these family members vary depending upon the circumstance. Preston's parents were legally separated for over 2 1/2 years during his middle school years. Both he and his brother lived in a nearby town with their mother but saw their father on a regular basis.

Preston's relationships with immediate family members has been described by relatives as being detached. It seems as if Preston has built walls around himself to protect him from his own pain, fear, and insecurity surrounding his father's illness, his

mother's alcoholism, and his parents' separation.

Elders and Authority Figures

Relationships with adults and authority figures were healthy until Preston reached junior high and his father developed cancer. He had remained well-mannered around most adults until that time; but after his father's diagnosis, he began to demonstrate difficulty in relating to authority figures, primarily his father and school officials.

Peers

Peer relationships were adequate for Preston at the time of his father's illness. He did not talk much to adults about the daily events in his life. He did not tend to discuss openly any areas of concern unless they became a problem for him.

Preston moved away from home for approximately 6 months during his senior year. He lived with a friend in the neighboring school district as a way to remove himself from the stress of school and family.

Employment

Preston spent the summer between his junior and senior years working for the Department of Natural Resources in a Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) position. In an interview, he reported that his relationship with his work supervisor was satisfactory, and he also stated that he enjoyed his work. Preston is currently employed through the JTPA in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) office in his county, working in his own office on computers and with plat (map) books of county farm acres. His primary responsibility involves crop allocation and set-aside measurement. Through his work, Preston has developed many professional relationships with area farmers. Preston has indicated that he enjoys this job, but would like more time outdoors and less time in the office.

Recreation

At the time of his father's illness, which occurred simultaneously with puberty, Preston began to pursue his own interests and frequently participated in community recreation activities. Preston enjoys the

outdoors, working with the land, nature, animals, and especially likes sports. He spends his free time with several friends, some to whom he is closer than others.

Emotional Health

When Preston is in situations in which he feels confident in his abilities, his self-esteem seems to be high. Examples of these situations might include: being with friends where he is recognized for his individuality and sense of humor; working in his agricultural office through JTPA, where he is respected for his knowledge of farming; and completing mechanical projects by himself or with friends, where he is successful in the outcome of his work. However, in the past, when faced with writing and reading assignments, and other academic tasks where weaknesses impede success, his frustration level seemed to increase and inversely, his self-esteem seemed to drop. At times, this frustration caused Preston to act out during school. According to teachers' and parents' observations, Preston seemed to experience a higher level of confidence when presented with hands-on activities.

As a result of Preston's frustration with school and past family experiences (his parents' separation, his mother's alcoholism, and his father's cancer), several adult figures have noted that Preston has displayed alcoholic tendencies. These tendencies first coincided with the attainment of his driver's license, possibly because this gave him freedom to leave his house and his parents' supervision. Other explanations for this behavior might include a genetic predisposition to alcoholism on his mother's side, peer influence, and typical adolescent rebellion.

Academic Development

Preston's school history includes attendance at a local preschool for one year, enrollment at one elementary school until fourth grade and another school for the fifth and sixth grades, and attendance at the original school until the fall of his senior year. Preston dropped out of school during his senior year.

Early Difficulties

Preston began to have academic problems (a short attention span, high distractibility, short-term memory

problems, and difficulty retaining information) in the first grade. These problems seemed to be more apparent in the school setting than at home.

First Grade. In the first grade, Preston received satisfactory grades in most areas, but his homeroom teacher was concerned about his reading and handwriting abilities. He also tended to be irresponsible in finishing his school assignments. As a result of these behaviors, Preston was evaluated, qualified for, and attended remedial reading classes, but no further evaluation was conducted beyond the subject of reading.

Second Grade. In the second grade, Preston received primarily unsatisfactory grades despite what was reported as a good effort. It also was reported that he needed to improve the neatness of his work. He reportedly related well to both his peers and to those in authority at school. There were no concerns in the areas of physical health, vision, hearing, motor functioning, or speech and language skills.

Iowa Test of Basic Skills scores during his second grade year indicated that Preston was one year below grade placement in most of the areas tested. He scored two years below grade placement in listening skills,

indicating a severe deficit in this particular area. He scored near grade placement in mathematics, indicating this as a relative strength. At that time, Preston's teacher considered retaining him in the second grade. However, he was passed into the third grade with the others in his class.

Third Grade. In October of his third grade year, Preston was evaluated for the first time by an AEA psychologist. This evaluation was based on a speculation that he was meeting the following criteria for inclusion in learning disabled programs in this particular school: "...average intelligence with a significant discrepancy in reading, writing, or math and...a need for special education services" (Department of Education, State of Iowa, 1981).

The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children--Revised (WISC-R) was administered, and according to the psychologist's report, Preston was pleasant and cooperative throughout the testing sessions. For this reason, the results were considered valid. The subject responded in a very reflective and persistent manner to all tasks. He clearly expressed his ideas verbally,

using examples and elaborating to clarify his points when necessary.

Interpretation of WISC-R Scores

The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised (WISC-R) was administered and Preston obtained scores in the High Average to Superior range of cognitive functioning, the highest percent of the population in this respect. There was a significant difference between Preston's full-scale verbal and performance scores, with verbal scores being notably higher. However, the full-scale performance score was in the Average range.

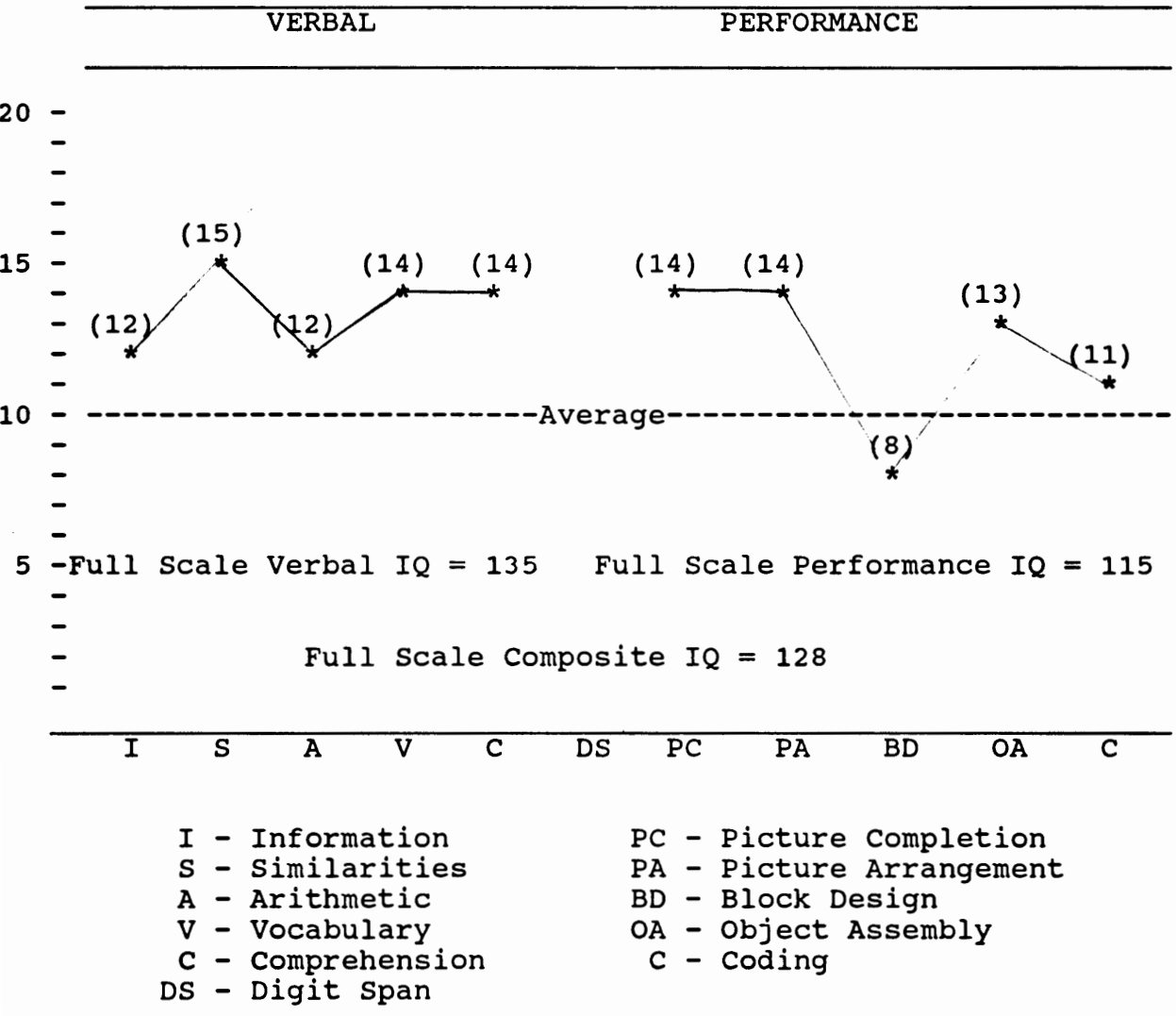
Preston exhibited multiple strengths, including Similarities, Vocabulary, Comprehension, Picture Completion, and Picture Arrangement. Preston's only significantly weak area of testing was Block Design, which indicated a deficit in the ability to process and transcribe visual information. Other possible deficits indicated by the Block Design subtest could be in the areas of perceptual organization skills, the comprehension of part-whole relationships, and visual memory skills. On some of these performance-related tasks, Preston was persistent, as

if he felt he would achieve success. In other performance tasks, he gave up easily, as if he lacked confidence in his ability to process the information accurately.

Preston met the requirements for inclusion in learning disabled services in that he was found to have high-average to high ability with a significant achievement deficit and a discrepancy in his scores. It should be noted that Preston was never evaluated for inclusion in gifted programs, although this possibility existed and was considered at one point during Preston's third grade year. Instead, Preston was assigned to a pullout resource classroom for help in the areas of reading comprehension, math processes, and organizational and study skills.

Preston's WISC-R scores are represented in Table 1:

Graphic Representation of WISC-R Scores of a Potential Gifted/Learning Disabled Student



I - Information
S - Similarities
A - Arithmetic
V - Vocabulary
C - Comprehension
DS - Digit Span

PC - Picture Completion
PA - Picture Arrangement
BD - Block Design
OA - Object Assembly
C - Coding

Placement

Preston spent the remainder of his school years participating in a pullout learning disabled program. In this setting, Preston had a very low energy level and needed constant motivation and supervision. This was evident to the teacher as he lay on his desk and leaned his head on his hand. However, when kept on task, Preston put forth much effort and was always very cooperative. Still, he accomplished less than was expected in the amount of time that was spent on his projects and activities, more so in writing assignments than when he was asked to verbalize his responses.

Difficulties in High School

In the fall of his freshman year, Preston continued to demonstrate a lack of organization and accuracy needed to complete his daily work. He had difficulty staying on task and, consequently, he made poor use of classroom time. Preston disliked homework, especially assignments that required extensive reading and/or writing. It was also noted that he would seldom ask for assistance with an assignment.

Throughout his academic career, Preston's teachers frequently indicated that he required more individual help on his daily assignments than could be provided in a regular classroom setting, thereby supporting previous evaluations.

Preston dropped out of school on a physician's recommendation because of an ulcer condition resulting primarily from accumulated frustrations regarding perceived limitations in the school district's policy and the continued oversight of his ability.

During the spring semester of Preston's senior year, he worked cooperatively with the JPTA program to be trained for work in agricultural and environmental fields, and to complete requirements for a General Equivalency Degree (GED). Evaluations of his work in a JTPA program have been exemplary, indicating that Preston is more capable than his academic records have indicated.

Preston is expected to complete his GED requirements in a timely manner and plans to continue his newfound career in the setting which was introduced to him by JTPA. Further, Preston is considering enrollment in post-secondary courses.

Summary of Portrait

Based on this medical, social, emotional, and academic synopsis several conclusions can be made:

1. All facets of Preston's medical health are within normal parameters, with the exception of an ulcer.

2. Preston seems to relate better to those in his own age group than to the adults in his family or at school. He enjoys his work and recreational activities.

3. Preston's self-confidence, and, consequently, his self-esteem, seem to correlate strongly with his level of frustration with his surroundings. Preston's difficulties in school and in the home give credence to the idea that he may have a certain amount of emotional anxiety. It has been speculated that one of Preston's methods of coping with this anxiety is alcohol abuse.

4. Preston's academic development seems to have been hindered by a lifetime of special education services which overemphasized weaknesses, but failed to recognize strengths. By having his strengths denied for so long, Preston is only now learning that he is a capable individual when he is in supportive situations.

The following diagram is a comprehensive depiction of Preston's affective behaviors, behavioral symptoms, and cognitive and metacognitive strengths and weaknesses.

Profile of Preston:

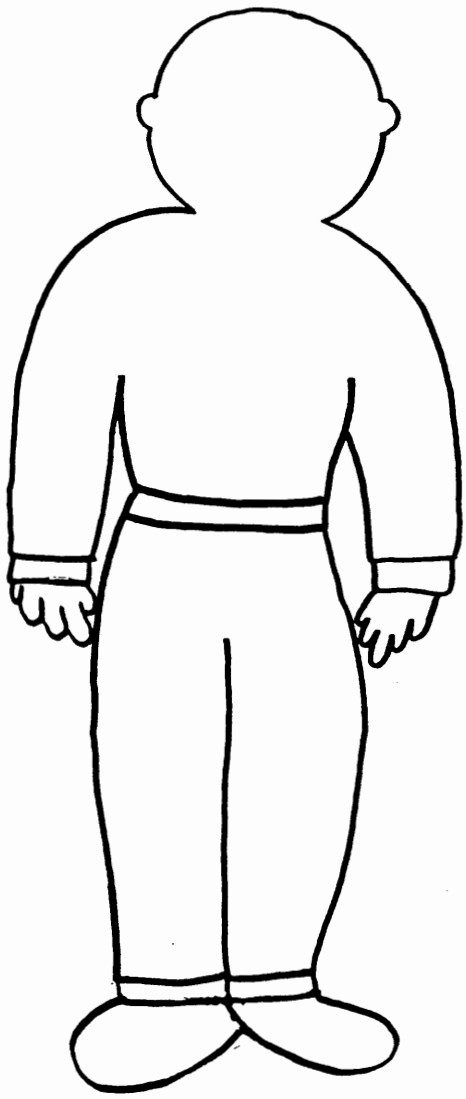
A Potential Gifted/Learning Disabled Student

Affective Behaviors:

--Rebellion
--Sense of humor
--Emotional anxiety

Behavioral Symptoms:

--Inability to stay on task
--Persistent when motivated



Cognitive Deficits:

--Visually distractable
--Perceptual deficits
--Specific academic deficits

Cognitive Strengths:

--Abstract reasoning
--Verbal skills
--Problem solving
--Creative thinking

Metacognitive Deficits:

--Organization and planning
--Part-to-whole thinking
--Memory skills

Metacognitive Strengths:

--Intuitive thinking
--Self-questioning
--Interprets on-going experiences

Chapter IV

Synthesis of Review and Portrait

> From the beginning of formal academic instruction, most of these [gifted/learning disabled] children have been recognized as having learning problems, but unfortunately, because of such early identification, many have not been discerned as gifted....Unfortunately, students can be placed in a remedial program that does not meet their intellectual needs and that further exacerbates their problems. (Daniels, 1983, p. 6)

Udall (1985) holds that students who have been identified as gifted/learning disabled often are placed in resource programs for students with learning disabilities. The negative impacts of failures that were experienced in the regular classroom are further exacerbated by the deficit approach used in teaching students with learning disabilities. Furthermore, gifted/learning disabled students are usually not

successfully placed in gifted programs because they lack the necessary organizational skills and the ability to complete written work within required time allotments (Whitmore and Maker, 1985).

> At the first sign of serious school failure, the student should be referred to a diagnostician, possibly a child psychologist, who can determine the child's strongest learning style--visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, or a combination of these. The weakest modes of learning should also be determined. (Williams, 1988, p. 17).

Preston is one of many students who exemplifies these scholars' thoughts. This chapter is devoted to comparing the recommended best practice suggested by the review of literature to Preston's experience as a "paradoxical learner".

Identification and Inclusion

Preston was identified early as a learning disabled student, based on criteria for inclusion that had been developed according to state and federal mandates and operational definitions of "learning

disability". Preston's teachers considered placement in talented and gifted programs but ultimately did not follow through with the idea. It can be speculated that the teachers did not agree with the notion that a student can be both gifted and learning disabled. Since the problem was made manifest in negative behaviors and low scores on standardized tests and academic work, and since Preston's teachers failed to recognize indications of giftedness in these behaviors, Preston was placed in a pullout program for learning disabled students. Preston may have had a different school experience altogether if there had been a consistent and comprehensive definition of the term "gifted/learning disabled" which would have pinpointed his paradoxical needs.

Humphrey's research (1990) suggests that Preston should have been identified as a gifted/learning disabled student no later than kindergarten or first grade. Teachers had the opportunity to conduct a complete battery of tests at this time. This would have indicated strengths as well as weaknesses and a discrepancy of scores in the first grade, when it was

discovered that Preston needed remediation in the area of reading.

Characteristics

Preston exhibited several of the characteristics delineated in Ehrlich's (1982) negative characteristics of giftedness, primarily: restlessness, a sense of humor, and an unwillingness to do homework. These characteristics all contributed to Preston's perceived mischief, but the teachers who made this assumption seemed not to consider the possibility that Preston was a gifted child trying to call attention to his giftedness but was doing so in a negative manner. Preston's teachers should have been aware of both the positive and negative characteristics of his behavior and their relationship to the process of identification in various special education programs.

Suggested Placements

Preston was placed in a pullout learning disabled program for remediation in reading. Had the teachers in Preston's school been more sensitive to his paradoxical needs and not merely his deficit areas, he

might have been served differently, perhaps in pullout programs for both learning disabilities and giftedness. This would have strengthened Preston's deficits and challenged his superior abilities. Another strategy could have been to work with his strengths in the context of regular and learning disabled classes.

It is not likely that Preston would have been successful strictly in a talented and gifted classroom or pullout program, even with recognition of his remedial needs. Preston's identified weaknesses--visual and perceptual skills--are minimal and are outweighed by strengths in number. However, the implications of having this particular set of deficits give them much greater magnitude when one considers the dominance of visual teaching methods used in schools and the way that these deficits affect other areas of learning.

Success in the Classroom

Preston spent the majority of his school years feeling frustrated and as though he were an academic failure. This indicates that he most likely did not perceive himself to be a successful student. Further,

his grades were below average (primarily D's), so Preston's official school records reinforced this perception. Preston's teachers, upon seeing that the original placement was not appropriate, should have considered other strategies. They could have provided enrichment alternatives along with remediation, encouraged him to excel in his strong areas, provided instruction that matched his varied, non-visual learning styles, adjusted homework requirements, and/or involved his parents and regular classroom teachers in these strategies. Additionally, it is the writer's opinion that more counseling should have been provided to assist Preston in learning to cope with the challenges of being a paradoxical learner. Because there was no change in instructional strategy when Preston continued to fail after his initial placement, he was marked for inevitable faiure in school at a relatively early age.

CHAPTER V

Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations, and Implications for Future Research

Summary

Research supports the idea that gifted/learning disabled students exist as a small population in our schools. They are "paradoxical learners", with many discrepant circumstances: (a) in scores on standardized tests, (b) in their achievement in various school subjects, and (c) in their overall achievement when compared to aptitude.

These students are not being identified in schools because, to a large degree, many educators find it difficult to accept the idea that gifts and deficits can exist in a single student. The term "gifted/ learning disabled" has not been defined to the extent that other special education terms have been, either legally or professionally. The definition is, at this point, only a set of vague conditions that many

educators do not apply to students, either concretely or consistently. Because of a lack of an effective definition which can be applied universally across the field of education, the population of gifted/learning disabled students, however small, is being neglected by school systems.

This negligence has resulted in educators' failure to identify and include many students in appropriate educational settings. It seems that a student with paradoxical needs often is served only in relationship to remedial capacities, with little regard for strengths. According to established research, an effective way to identify exceptional students is to recognize the characteristics of exceptionality, both positive and negative, with regard to the signals that these characteristics are sending about the student's needs.

Once identified, it is both possible and essential to meet the needs of paradoxical learners without creating additional programs by integrating the gifted/learning disabled student into existing classroom environments. The success of using these existing classrooms depends entirely on the sensitivity

of teachers to the students' needs and their ability to either meet these needs directly in the classroom or indirectly with a team teaching approach.

The portrait of Preston, a potential gifted/ learning disabled student, illustrates many of the conditions set forth in the review of literature. Preston experienced discrepancies in standardized test scores, achievement in his subjects, and in his overall achievement and aptitude. Further, he was overlooked because of an inadequate definition of his condition and accurate recognition of behavioral and academic characteristics. Preston's many strengths were overlooked when he was placed in a pullout program for his learning disabilities, without special programming for his giftedness. Preston could not be described as successful in the classroom, in terms of either satisfaction with his education or his grades.

Conclusions

Based on the fact that there are students in our educational system who possess both gifts and deficits, educators must accommodate the needs of these "paradoxical learners" with comprehensive gifted/

learning disabled programs. Educators must begin with a clear understanding of the terms describing various conditions and the characteristics that indicate these conditions. Next, clear criteria for inclusion must be introduced into the school system. Once criteria are established, students must be identified consistently, systematically, and comprehensively by comparing known characteristics of exceptionality, strengths, and weaknesses against the displayed behaviors of individual students. Finally, in order to serve the gifted/learning disabled child more effectively, educators must make comprehensive efforts to address the following issues:

1. Educators must decide how to operationally define terms related to gifted, learning disabled, and gifted/learning disabled students, and must use these definitions consistently.

2. Educators must use these operational definitions to direct students to programs that are appropriate to the needs of the individual student. It must be noted that an extremely high IQ does not necessarily guarantee success in the classroom, nor does a learning disability have to lead to failure.

3. Educators must develop an increased awareness of characteristics of giftedness and learning disabilities so they are able and willing to see signs of exceptionality when faced with inappropriate behavior or atypical achievement.

4. Educators must be flexible and continue to adapt the student's learning conditions to the student's needs. This can be accomplished by adjusting the classroom placement and/or the curriculum if improvement does not occur after one evaluation and one approach to implementation of special programs. Educators must not give up on students or blame them wholly for their lack of success in school.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this review of literature and portrait, more research could be conducted in the following areas:

1. Studies could be completed in the area of identification of and programming for gifted/learning disabled individuals. This implies the development of a concrete definition of the term "gifted/learning disabled".

2. Schools must conduct needs assessments at all levels in an effort to determine what percentage of the school population is indeed gifted/learning disabled, as it appears most students are not currently being identified. This implies the need for standardization of methods.

3. Additional research is required to develop innovative instruments for the measurement of ability, or at least to adapt existing screening procedures, so they are more efficient and accurate.

4. Educators must use multiple assessments to identify more efficiently and accurately gifted/ learning disabled students. Components of the multiple assessments should include, among other things, observations, creativity tests, teacher, parent, and student nominations, standardized test scores, as well as negative behaviors and characteristics that can provide additional insight.

5. Additional research is needed to compare various program models, such as Bett's Autonomous Learner Model (1985), Meeker's SOI Model (Structure of Intellect, 1969) and Daniel and Cox's Flexible Pacing Model for Able Learners (1985), in order to provide

instructors with longitudinal evaluation of the effects of participation in the programs on the students' future performance in school and adult life.

6. Educators must become increasingly aware of students' learning styles and then implement appropriate teaching strategies that complement these learning styles. For example, microcomputers could be introduced into the classroom for use by the gifted/ learning disabled population in order to benefit both of their exceptionalities. This would be especially true in the remediation of learning disabilities, particularly for those students with visual/fine motor deficits and organizational difficulties. It would also increase, among other things, creativity and research skills related to their giftedness.

7. Educators must commit to the idea of sharing research they have conducted in the area of gifted/learning disabled services with their professional peers through written and oral scholarly discussion. Further, teacher preperation programs must prepare their undergraduate students to serve the paradoxical learner. An entire course devoted to the gifted/ learning disabled student would be ideal, but

it is not likely to evolve because of time constraints and budgetary considerations for students and universities. However, there are other ways to bring this population to the attention of education majors. The research could be communicated in many ways: (a) as part of a special education survey course, (b) within each methods curriculum, (c) as an endorsement program to be completed by independent study, and (d) through single-credit workshops.

8. Research must also be shared with individuals in other professions, such as the legal profession, who can advocate for gifted/learning disabled students and their programs. This advocacy would assist in the development of a concrete definition of the term "gifted/learning disabled". Because this concrete definition would be a matter of law, it would increase the likelihood that identification and inclusion practices would be consistent and fair.

Implications for Future Research

The information derived from the synthesis of the review of literature and the portrait of a potential gifted/learning disabled student presents additional

opportunities for related research which could be initiated. Several suggestions follow:

1. Implement a detailed case study of an identified gifted/learning disabled student by completing more extensive assessments than those provided in school records and by reassessments of previously administered tests.

2. Implement a detailed case study of several identified gifted/learning disabled students in order to eliminate the inaccuracies that inevitably exist when results of one case study are generalized to an entire group.

3. Provide in-service training to educators at all levels and in all areas of the curriculum, testing to see whether teachers' increased awareness of giftedness/learning disability results in better identification, placement, and service.

4. Examine gifted/learning disabled students in settings other than school, in order to discover the student's strengths and difficulties in everyday activities, and to incorporate these findings into the classroom as part of the student's assessment of needs.

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Appendix A

Glossary of Terms

This glossary has been compiled from entries listed in the Dictionary of Gifted, Talented, and Creative Education Terms (Frasier and Carland, 1982). This dictionary is a collection of terms defined by various professionals in the field of education, and their citations are listed behind each definition.

Achievement

"(a) Accomplishment or proficiency of performance in a given skill or body of knowledge (b) progress in school; theoretically different from intelligence but overlaps with it to a degree (Good, 1973, 7)."

Affective Development

"Development that involves awareness, receiving, responding, valuing, and integration into a value structure (Clark, 1979, 178)."

Aptitude

"1. (a) A group of characteristics deemed to be symptomatic of an individual's ability to acquire proficiency in a given area; examples might be a particular art, school subject, or vocational area; (b) ability measured by the amount of time required by the learner to acquire mastery of a task; thus, given enough time, all students can conceivably attain such mastery (Good, 1973, 39)..."

Assessment

"The process by which as many data as possible are gathered and used to evaluate a person more accurately (Good, 1973, 43)."

Cognition

"Immediate discovery, awareness, rediscovery or recognition of information in various forms, comprehension or understanding (Meeker, 1969, 195)."

Creativity

"A complex process that usually involves a range of qualities, including awareness, originality,

fluency, flexibility, commitment, and complexity (Leeper and Skipper, 1974, 351)."

Identification

"1. The process of screening children by means of standardized test procedures and/or observational methods and selecting superior children for educational programs designed particularly for them. A good identification program should discover other characteristics of gifted children besides their aptitudes capacities (DeHaan, 1957, 41-48)....4. The process of finding those students who meet the criteria of giftedness adopted in a given school or system (SREB, 1962, 30)."

Intelligence

"The capacity to learn; the sum total of knowledge acquired by an individual; the ability to adjust or to adapt to the total environment (Suran and Rizzo, 1979, 490)."

Standardized Tests

"2. As opposed to a teacher-made test, a

standardized test is designed to be administered and scored under uniform testing conditions. Norms are also usually provided (Sax, 1980, 633)."

Teaching Strategy

"A method of organizing and presenting instructional materials and directing students' ways of dealing with the materials in order to elicit student's [sic] intellectual activities (Kuo, 1976, 7)."

Underachiever

"2. That portion of gifted youngsters who do not fulfill predicted academic performances from measures of cognitive ability (Gallagher, 1975, 341)..."

Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised (WISC-R)

"Author: David Wechsler. An individual test of mental activities which are known as general intelligence of ages 5-15. The WISC-R gives 15 scores, divided into two scales: verbal and performance. Total score MA and IQ scores are also given. The complete test takes from 40-60 minutes. The IQ

equivalency of the 98% score on the WISC-R is 131. This test requires a trained examiner. Available from: Psychological Corporation...(Clark, 1979, 411)."

Appendix B

Comprehensive Characteristics Lists

Giftedness

Baska (1989, pp. 17-23)

Gifted children are exceptional in the areas of cognitive and affective functioning:

Cognitive characteristics. (a) Ability to manipulate abstract symbol systems, (b) power of concentration, (c) unusually well developed memoy, (d) early language interest and development, (e) curiosity, (f) preference for independent work, (g) multiple interests, (h) ability to generate original ideas.

Affective characteristics. (a) Sense of justice, (b) altruism and idealism, (c) sense of humor, (d) emotional intensity, (e) early concern about death, (f) perfectionism, (g) high levels of

energy, (h) strong attachments and commitments, (i) aesthetic sensitivity.

Baska holds that these characteristics must be considered in the following context:

> (a) Not all gifted children will display all of the characteristics, (b) there will tend to be a range among gifted children in respect to each characteristic, (c) these characteristics may be viewed as developmental in the sense that some children may not display them at early stages of development but may at later stages. Others may manifest the characteristics from a very early age, (d) characteristics of the gifted tend to cluster and thus constitute different profiles across children as the combination of characteristics varies. (Feldhusen, Van Tassel-Baska, Seeley, 1989, p. 17)

Ehrlich (1982, p. 164)

The following are "negative characteristics that may be clues to unrecognized giftedness":

(a) Excessive restlessness or diagnosed

hyperactivity; (b) mischief making, especially if it is associated with a sharp sense of humor; (c) poor achievement, even though other behavior contradicts this evidence; (d) leadership as recognized by peers, for example, leading a gang; (e) withdrawal, indifference, inattention, daydreaming in class; (f) excessive cutting (skipping school); (g) unwillingness to do homework; (h) persistence in pursuing a discussion or topic beyond the teacher's expressed cutoff point. (Humphrey, 1990, p. 5)

Learning Disability

Kuczen (1982, p. 183)

These are some of the "symptoms of learning disability":

(a) Difficulty following directions; (b) difficulty understanding, even after having paid attention; (c) inconsistent performance from one day to the next...; (d) confuses left and right; (e) poor handwriting; (f) difficulty spelling words...; (g) loses place when reading because of

difficulty in moving eyes smoothly from left to right; (h) mixes up the order of words in a sentence when reading aloud or speaking; (i) reverses letters or entire words (mirror writing); (j) short attention span; (k) poor reading ability; (l) poor language development; (m) difficulty in sports activities, hopping, skipping, or jumping; (n) apt to forget what has been learned; (o) difficulty in copying from a book or blackboard; (p) difficulty learning phonics; (q) loses interest in school; withdraws; (r) doesn't complete assignments or homework. (Humphrey, 1990, pp. 18, 19)

Giftedness/Learning Disability

Cordell and Cannon (1985, p. 144)

The following are from a table entitled "Characteristics of Learning Disabled/Gifted Students": (a) High reasoning and verbal abilities; (b) often a specific talent area; (c) discrepant verbal and performance abilities (WISC-R or Stanford-Binet); (d) visual perceptual/fine motor difficulties; (e)

attention deficit disorders; (f) slow response/ reaction time, slow to produce work, ponderous thinkers; (g) difficulty shifting activities; (h) lack of organizational skills; (i) deficient or uneven academic skills (frequently high in one area); (j) perfectionism and low self-esteem; (k) easily discouraged, tend to be inflexible and quickly upset; (l) vulnerability in social relationships.

Udall (1985, p. 207)

Here are some "common characteristics" of gifted/learning disabled students:

(a) Poor, sometimes nonexistent, organizational skills; (b) a lack of coordination in fine motor tasks, exhibited in poor handwriting; (c) high motivation only in areas of interest; (d) high degree of creativity, humor, and verbal skills; (e) poor self-concept; (f) a repertoire of compensatory strategies; (g) good memory on topics of interest; (h) superior higher-level thinking skills;...(i) a strong fear of taking risks; (j)

> disabilities primarily in the area of language arts, notably spelling. (Whitmore, 1985, p. 207)

Silverman (1989, p. 37)

This is a comparison of characteristics of underachievers (Whitmore, 1980) and the compiled characteristics of various other authors who have studied gifted/learning disabled children:

> (a) Perfectionistic, (b) supersensitive, (c) lacks social skills, (d) socially isolated, (e) has unrealistic self-expectations, (f) low in self-esteem, (g) hyperactive, (h) distractible, (i) has psychomotor inefficiency, (j) chronically inattentive, (k) frustrated by...demands... (l) fails to complete assignments, (m) excessively critical of self and others, (n) rebellious against drill and excessive repetition, (o) disparaging of the work they are required to do, (p) become "an expert" in one area and dominate discussions with their expertise.
>
> If we take a second look at this [Whitmore's] list, we discover an interesting paradox: studies of learning disabled/gifted

children (cited in parentheses) have produced an identical set of characteristics. [List is repeated in the article with citations.]

Silverman (1989, p. 39)

"A particular constellation of strengths and weaknesses has emerged as the most dominant pattern observed in gifted students with specific learning disabilities":

Potential strengths. (a) Is extraordinarily capable with puzzles and mazes; (b) has a sophisticated sense of humor; (c) has high abstract ability; (d) is excellent at mathematical reasoning; (e) has a keen visual memory; (f) has an unusual imagination; (g) is highly creative; (h) comprehends complex relations and systems; (i) has penetrating insights; (j) shows exceptional ability in geometry and science; (k) may have artistic, musical or mechanical aptitude; (l) grasps easily metaphors, analogies, satire; (m) has good problem finding skills.

Potential weaknesses. (a) May have difficulty with phonics; (b) may have difficulty

with spelling; (c) may have difficulty with rote memorization; (d) may have difficulty with computation; (e) may perform poorly on timed tests; (f) may seem spacey and inattentive; (g) may have illegible, labored handwriting; (h) may "forget" homework or submit work of poor quality; (i) may act first and think later; (j) may be poor at biology and foreign languages; (k) may doodle in class time instead of listening.

Appendix C

Consent Forms

Human Study Consent Form

The purpose of this study is to review the current literature on gifted/learning-disabled individuals and then to create addition data to the available literature by means of a case study. The literature review will cover the following areas: The first area of discussion is the on going debate as to whether students can be identified as both gifted and learning-disabled and what sets of measures from standardized tests and what characteristics assist educators in differentiating gifted students and gifted/learning-disabled students. Secondly, educators must consider where the gifted/learning disabled students are presently served and how these paradoxical students are presently being identified. And finally, if gifted/learning disabled students are found to exist in the school population, educators need to understand how

instructors program and develop curriculum to meet their needs.

The subject's school files will be reviewed to see if scores and characteristics are similar to those of the gifted/learning-disabled students. The researcher will also review any interventions that took place during the subjects schooling. If needed, (if scores are outdated or not WISC-R tests) the subject may be asked to be retested by a qualified individual in the UNI Department of Educational Psychology. This will be at no risk or discomfort to the subject being studied.

Any additional information that the researcher finds in relation to the individual subject will be relayed to the subject, his parents and appropriate school personnel, if so desired. If any patterns appear, appropriate suggestions will be made to the subject and his family. The information gained during this study will also benefit other students who are both gifted and learning-disabled. Any new information will provide a foundation for further research in this new field of study.

The school files of the subject will be kept in the personal possession of the researcher. All

references to the subjects name, address or school shown in the copied files will be whited-out when first viewed by the researcher. The files will be reviewed primarily by the researcher and, if needed, by the research advisor. Upon completion of the case study the documents will be shredded and destroyed.

The subject's participation in this study is voluntary and may be discontinued at any time (without penalty or loss). The subject also has the right to refuse participation in any part or all of the investigation.

The investigator of this study may be contacted at the following address: Caroline M. Bredekamp, 927 1/2 W. 5th, Waterloo, Iowa 50702, (319) 232-2572 or Caroline M. Bredekamp, c/o Dr. William Waack, Advisor, College of Education, SEC 159A, University of Northern *Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614, (319) 273-2265.*

The subject and his parents may contact the office of the Human Subjects Coordinator, University of Northern Iowa, (319) 273-2748, for answers to questions about the research and about the rights of the research subject and his parents.

I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as stated above and the possible risks arising from it. I hereby agree to participate in this project. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement.

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Signature of Subject	Date
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Signatures of Parents	Date
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Signature of Investigator	Date

Testing Consent Form

I hereby give my permission to the University of Northern Iowa Educational Psychology Department and graduate student Caroline M. Bredekamp to complete a WISC-R or similar intelligence test on Preston, if it is deemed necessary in the course of completing a case study on said individual. It is understood that the test results, if needed, will be used in a confidential manner and will be used solely for the completion of the case study investigation. All references to the subject being tested will be protected and changed in the writing of the case study.

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Signature of Subject, Minor Date

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Signature of Subject's Mother Date

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Signature of Subject's Father Date

School Consent Form

I hereby give my permission to the ABC Community School District to release a copy of the complete student files of Preston to University of Northern Iowa graduate student, Caroline M. Bredekamp. I also give my permission for the ABC Community School's administration and/or staff to answer any questions she may have relevant to her study. It is understood that the files will be used in a confidential manner and as part of a case study investigation. This is in fulfillment of said student's non-thesis paper. All references to the student, parents, school and its' personnel will be protected and changed in the writing of the case study.

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Signature of Subject, Minor	Date
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Signature of Subject's Mother	Date
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Signature of Subject's Father	Date

Reference Consent Form

I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as explained by the researcher and explained in the signed parental documentation provided to me by the researcher. I also understand that I am in no way responsible for any possible misuse or misrepresentation of the material and information that I provide the researcher. It has also been explained to me that my name or any reference to my identity will be protected and changed in the course of the researcher's writing of the case study. I hereby agree to fully cooperate in this study and to provide the researcher with accurate records and information.

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Signature of Reference Date

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Signature of Researcher Date

Video Consent Form

I hereby give my permission to Caroline M. Bredekamp, researcher, to video tape a conversation with case study subject, for use in her research and possible future presentations pertaining to the research. The video tape will be used in a professional manner and will remain in the sole possession of the researcher.

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Signature of Subject, Minor	Date
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Signature of Subject's Mother	Date
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Signature of Subject's Father	Date