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Literature-based reading as a curricular option for the gifted reader

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Literature-based reading as a curricular option for the gifted reader

Abstract

In 1984 Mangieri and Madigan initiated a survey that was sent to 150 schools across the United States. Its purpose was to find out what type of reading curriculum was being implemented for their gifted readers. They found that the same basal series which was used for regular readers also was being used for gifted readers. Some of the schools did accelerate students through the basal and/or use enrichment activities, but there was a wide variance.

Literature-Based Reading
As A Curricular Option
For The Gifted Reader

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

by
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This Research Paper by: **Sally Simdorn**

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Curricular Option For The Gifted Reader.**

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

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Introduction to the Problem

Statement of Problem

In 1984 Mangieri and Madigan initiated a survey that was sent to 150 schools across the United States. Its purpose was to find out what type of reading curriculum was being implemented for their gifted readers. They found that the same basal series which was used for regular readers also was being used for gifted readers. Some of the schools did accelerate students through the basal and/or use enrichment activities, but there was a wide variance.

Such use of the basal approach to teach gifted readers has caused problems in motivation and achieving the potential of this special population of students. In most cases as discussed by Brown and Rogan (1983); Savage (1983); Reis and Renzulli (1989); and Van Tassel-Baska (1989) there is a concern that the basal program is designed for the average learner and tends to be boring and sterile for the gifted reader. It is below his or her ability and interests. Reis and Renzulli (1989) report the reading level of most textbooks has been dropped two grade levels to meet the needs of the majority of the student population. They found that there is much repetition, and the emphasis is on minimum competency for all. Therefore, the basal material tends to lack challenge and does not respond to the special needs of the gifted reader. As discussed by Van Tassel-Baska (1989), the basal encourages these special students to coast

along and meet the minimum standard as set. In other words, the basal approach does not encourage them to go beyond and stretch their capabilities. Brown and Rogan (1983) state that, especially in the lower elementary grades, the basal is only within the lower reaches of Bloom's Taxonomy. Thus it would appear that these gifted readers need a differentiated curriculum in order to meet their individual reading needs and interests which in turn will maintain and/or trigger an interest in reading.

Using the basal approach creates a second problem which is actually an effect of the first problem discussed. That is the problem of catching the gifted reader's interest and keeping it at a high level. In a survey completed by Martin (1984), intellectually gifted students stated that there were better things to do than read. They thought that reading material was uninteresting, and they did not like to read selections that were not of their own choosing.

Why has this happened? The literature suggests that the basal approach to reading encourages this negative attitude for the following reasons. First, many gifted readers already know how to read or can read at an accelerated pace (Brown and Rogan ,1983). Second, when they are put into the basal reading series, they are usually expected to go through the same drill and practice as the rest of the class (Bonds and Bonds, 1983; Mangieri and Madigan, 1984; Reis and Renzulli, 1989). Third, much time is spent on word attack/phonics drills. Thus it would appear that the gifted reader

already has mastered these skills independently, and boredom may be a result. Savage (1983) has suggested that the assignment of tedious workbook pages may have a negative effect on reading attitudes. He also concludes that the continued use of the basal reading series is supported by administrators because it is orderly with no skill gaps, and in addition, may be used simply because it represents a major investment for the school district.

It would appear that gifted readers deserve more than what is being offered by a basal series. According to many studies (Brown and Rogan, 1983; Bonds and Bonds, 1983; Savage, 1983; Mangieri and Madigan, 1984; Reis and Renzulli, 1989), the basal, when used as the curriculum for the gifted readers in the regular classroom, does not develop their reading level potential or keep their interest in reading. This writer can attest to the accuracy of these observations through personal experience. In a 4th grade classroom this past year, a small number of gifted readers did not like to read. There were "better things to do." A number of reading incentives (awards, etc.) were tried, but they seemed to work for only a short while. Even the use of enrichment activities as a challenge was not enough. During the last two months of school, with the permission of the principal, a decision was made to have these students read a trade book along with accompanying activities and discussion and to take them out of the basal reader. An increase in interest in reading was immediately observable.

Currently there is a strong movement to replace the traditional basal reading program with literature-based reading in the elementary classroom (Bader, Eldredge, and Veatch, 1987; Cullinan, 1989; Eldredge and Butterfield, 1986; Fuhler, 1990; Tunnell and Jacobs, 1989; Zarillo, 1989). Even if replacing the basal series with literature-based reading does not seem realistic for some students, at least it definitely should be a consideration for the gifted reader (Martin, 1984; Mangieri and Madigan, 1984; Reis and Renzulli, 1984; Schlichter, 1984; Van Tassel-Baska, 1989; Polette and Hamlin, 1980, Polette, 1982).

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this paper was to review current literature to determine the unique curricular needs of the gifted reader in the regular classroom. It also reviewed the literature to examine the major elements of the literature-based reading program and to determine which of these elements correlate with the unique needs of the gifted reader. In addition, the review searched out suggestions for the implementation of a reading program for the gifted readers who are assigned full time to the classroom environment.

In examining the issue of literature-based reading as it applies to the gifted reader, the paper explored the literature in an attempt to answer these questions:

- 1) What are the unique curriculum needs of the gifted reader?
- 2) What are the important elements of a literature-based program?
- 3) How does literature-based reading meet the needs of the gifted reader?
- 4) What suggestions are there for the implementation of a reading program for the gifted reader?

Definitions

For purposes of this literature review, the writer established the following definitions of terms pertinent to this study:

Gifted reader in this paper denotes the student who is able to read substantially above his or her grade level - usually two or more years above, based on a standardized reading test, and who is capable of making rapid progress in reading when given the proper reading instruction (Bonds and Bonds, 1983; and Dole and Adams, 1983). Bonds and Bonds also present the following characteristics of the gifted reader: 1) exhibits an interest, persistence, and motivation for reading, and an acquired and exhibited extensive vocabulary; 2) is reading upon school entry; 3) displays a high level of cognitive ability and maturity which will be continually exhibited; and 4) is also able to retain what he or she has learned.

Literature-based reading, as defined by Zarillo (1989), is "instructional practices and student activities using novels, informational books, short stories, plays and poems." It is an inclusive term for all types of reading materials that are not rewritten for instructional purposes. Zarello states that in its strongest implementation, it replaces the basal reading program rather than supplementing it.

Review of Literature

What Are The Unique Reading Curriculum Needs of the Gifted Reader?

There is a basic consensus among researchers in gifted education that the gifted reader requires a differentiated reading curriculum to meet his or her individual needs (Dole and Adams 1983; Bonds and Bonds 1983; Van Tassel-Baska 1989; Gallagher 1985; and Polette 1982). This section of the literature review identifies those unique needs.

In a study conducted by Dole and Adams in 1983, a survey of leaders with expertise in gifted education and reading curriculum were asked to identify the needs of gifted readers. Four differentiated needs were identified as being more important for gifted readers than the non-gifted readers. First, there is a need to develop research and thinking skills. Second, higher-level

questioning techniques need to be implemented to develop higher-level thinking skills. Third, self-directed learnings, such as allowing self-selected reading experiences and the individual choice of independent research projects, are needed to develop individual interests. Fourth, the gifted reader needs to be involved with a guided study of various types of literature, such as the involvement with the Junior Great Books, to develop an awareness and appreciation of literature types. According to Polette and Hamlin (1980), this fourth need also allows the gifted reader to be exposed to gifted writers.

Bonds and Bonds (1983) and Reis and Renzulli (1989) stress the need to give gifted students an individualized approach to reading. This allows them to progress at their own rate and not be slowed down by the drill and practice of skills already mastered. They stress the fact that the teachers of these special students need to assess each child's level of achievement and be aware of his or her strengths and weaknesses. Such a need necessarily requires a differentiated curriculum which provides a context for skills to be taught.

Van Tassel-Baska (1989) presents general curriculum needs that can be applied to a specialized curriculum for the gifted reader as well. She suggests a content-based mastery dimension that allows gifted learners to move more rapidly through the curriculum. This can be applied to the reading curriculum for the gifted reader

because of the accelerated speed at which they can master skills. She also encourages a process-product research dimension that promotes in-depth and independent learning. Finally, she recommends that the curriculum incorporate an interdisciplinary approach that allows for the exploration of issues, themes, and ideas across the curriculum. The integration of the curriculum makes what is being learned more meaningful if the students see the connections between the subjects included in the general curriculum.

Gallagher (1985) suggests four basic needs that should be emphasized in a curriculum for gifted students in language arts, a component of which is reading. First, content enrichment is needed to allow the gifted reader additional time to practice skills of communication and expression to extend the boundary of space and time. It also enables the student to be receptive to the great and sensitive minds of the past by exposing the reader to a diversity of materials which can match the wide range of abilities, cultural background, and motivations in a diverse society. Second, Gallagher states there is a curriculum need for concept sophistication that helps to teach values. Gallagher believes this can be achieved through the use of quality literature. Third, Gallagher contends that the curriculum should have content novelty that holds a special appeal and value to the gifted student. This type of content may not always be appropriate for the regular classroom curriculum.

Gallagher believes this meets the need of the gifted reader to explore values and moral issues of the times. Finally, Gallagher identifies content acceleration as necessary for the gifted reader because it allows him or her time to use these skills in his or her own creative products.

Polette (1982), and Polette and Hamlin (1980), also state the need for the gifted reader to develop his or her creativity. They suggest that creativity, which can be an important need of the gifted student, must be brought to the reading experience.

What Are the Important Elements of A Literature-Based Reading Curriculum?

According to Polette (1982) most classroom reading instruction emphasizes the lower-level thinking processes of Bloom's taxonomy in which teachers are concerned with the decoding of words and the use of these words in sentences. Polette (1982) believes reading needs to go beyond that for the gifted reader. She states that reading should be the creation of visual images to "hook" one on books. These visual images are what one will remember in reading a book, not the individual words. Polette (1982) states that there are two long-range goals of a reading program for gifted readers: to create readers in the full, meaningful sense of the word; and to expand the child's reading, writing, speaking, and thinking vocabulary. This section examines the elements of a literature-

based reading program that encourage the development of these goals for the gifted reader.

First of all, a variety of trade books should be made available to the gifted students. Tunnell & Jacobs (1989), Hillock (1989), and Pollette (1982) stress this as being very important. Students need to be exposed to a variety of literature. Polette and Hamlin (1980) stress the need for gifted readers to meet gifted writers through the use of tradebooks to bring together the creative, lively minds of the reader and the writer. They also stress that tradebooks offer a variety of levels of meaning to match and exercise the minds of the gifted reader. Also, a variety of tradebooks allows the gifted reader self-decided choices which exposes them to different types of literature.

In addition, students need to have the opportunity to read aloud and/or also be read aloud to by their teacher. Polette (1982) stresses this as being important for the gifted reader as well as the regular classroom students. It gives him or her an opportunity to wonder, think, and exercise the creative imagination. Younger students, especially, should be allowed to read aloud with repeated readings. Cohen (1968); Cullinan, Jaggar, & Strickland (1974); Cullinan (1989); Hillock (1989); Fuhler (1990); Pinnell, Fried, & Estice (1990); and Labbo and Teale (1990) found evidence that repeated readings to real audiences had a positive effect on reading achievement. When teachers read to their students, no matter what

age, it serves as a positive role model for reading, stimulates interest, transmits the love of reading, strengthens skills, and helps to develop the imaginations of the gifted reader. The reading aloud of a wide variety of literature is encouraged by Bader, Eldredge, & Veatch (1987); Fuhler (1990); Polette (1982); and Polette and Hamlin (1980).

Another important ingredient is active oral participation. In research completed by Cullinan et al (1974), participation in oral language activities was shown to have a positive effect on reading achievement. Fuhler (1990) and Polette (1982) agree that the discussion of literature through the use of open-ended questions serves as a starting point to develop critical thinking skills, skills so necessary for the gifted reader. Additionally, it allows the students to respond to the literature and share with others what they have read (Zarillo, 1989).

Silent-sustained reading or independent reading of tradebooks should be provided as an integral part of the literature-based reading program (Tunnell & Jacobs, 1989; Bader et al, 1987; Hillock, 1989; and Zarillo 1989). Often the basal reading program does not allow time for this important aspect of reading. Independent reading is a time for the gifted reader and teacher to read materials of their own choosing without interruption. The time that students read independently directly affects reading achievement. The teacher's reading also serves as a positive role-model. Self-

selection of books for the gifted reader helps to develop a positive attitude toward reading (Tunnell and Jacobs, 1989). Self-selection also allows flexibility and truly meets the needs and interests of the gifted reader (Reis and Renzulli, 1989; Martin, 1984; Rupley, 1984; Polette, 1982; Polette & Hamlin, 1980).

A literature-based program provides a content-rich basis for process writing and output activities. Tunnell and Jacobs (1989); Fuhler (1990); Pinnell et al (1990); Polette (1982); Polette and Hamlin (1980); and Zarillo (1989) all stress this as an important element. It allows the gifted reader to manipulate and create with the language of words. Process writing also can include dialogue journal writing in which the gifted reader can express his or her reactions and opinions to what has been read, and in which the teacher can respond to the student. Process writing allows reading to become very meaningful for the student. The output activities allow the gifted student to become actively involved in what he or she has read. Activities such as writing and/or putting on a play, making puppets, designing posters help to develop the gifted reader's creativity which is an important element needed in a literature-based reading curriculum for the gifted reader (Polette, 1982).

Teacher directed activities, in the context of literature, should be used from time to time in a literature-based curriculum for the gifted reader. This allows the teacher to meet with students who are having difficulty in word recognition and vocabulary. It also

allows skills to be taught in a meaningful context (Bader et al, 1987; Eldredge and Butterfield, 1986; and Pinnel et al, 1990). Bader et al (1987) have found that these techniques, when used in the context of literature, increased reading achievement with young readers. In addition, teacher directed activities also allow the teacher to pull together basic elements of certain kinds of literature and enable the gifted reader a chance to compare and contrast, and to create their own literature (Reis and Renzulli, 1989).

Finally, the reading experts suggest that students should be heterogeneously grouped instead of in ability groups. Eldredge and Butterfield (1986) found there is value in mixed grouping and negative effects in ability grouping. Eldredge and Butterfield (1986) maintain that heterogeneous grouping also helps to develop a positive attitude toward reading. Students are grouped according to interest. They feel that when students are grouped according to interest, their reading attitude will improve and this will have a positive effect on reading achievement.

Literature-based reading can be implemented using three different approaches to the use of text as presented by Zarillo (1989) and Hiebert and Colt (1989). The most prevalent approach to literature-based language instruction is through the use of the core book. This is when all students within a group are reading the same novel or are having it read to them. The core books are then used as

springboards for independent reading, writing, and choices of activities. Another approach used is the literature unit. It has a unifying element such as an author, a theme from social studies or science, or a certain type of literature such as tall tales or fables. Children are grouped according to their interests, not according to their abilities. The third approach used is one of self-selection and self-pacing in which the students choose their reading material, read it at their own pace, and hold conferences with the teacher periodically. Most of the time this is used as a supplement to a core book or a literature unit. Zarillo (1989) suggests using a combination of all three approaches in teaching literature-based reading because there are strengths and weaknesses of each program if used separately.

How Does Literature-Based Reading Meet the Needs of the Gifted Reader?

In reviewing the literature dealing with the reading curriculum for the gifted reader, all authors stress the need to involve these students in a literature-rich curriculum. It seems evident, therefore, that a literature-based program can meet the specialized needs of the gifted reader in many ways. This section presents findings in the literature which point to ways that a literature-based program can meet the needs and encourage the development of *the gifted reader*.

One major concept revealed by the literature is that literature-based reading compliments the needs of the gifted reader more effectively than does a basal reading program. Van Tassel-Baska (1989) stresses that a basal reading series does not adequately respond to the needs of the gifted reader because the basal emphasizes basic skills which encourage minimum competency for all. The gifted reader is capable of achieving at higher levels of learning. Rupley (1984), suggests that the basal is more concerned with teaching students to read, whereas literature-based reading stresses reading as a means for learning because of the wide variety of available literature. Gifted students already know how to read, so their reading curriculum would encourage reading as a means for learning.

Gifted students have needs that are different from the regular student, just as students with learning difficulties also have special needs which require a differentiated curriculum. If educators truly desire to meet the learning needs of all students, then one is just as important as the other. As Reis and Renzulli (1989) so aptly state: "When a six year old who loves to read and is accustomed to reading several books a day encounters the typical basal reading system, the beginning of the end of a love affair with reading may result" (p. 92). They are referring to the ability level of a gifted reader and maintaining his or her interest in learning.

The second major concept to be derived from the literature is that there are important elements of a literature-based curriculum which correlate with the identified needs of the gifted reader. Five examples of such correlation as derived from the literature review are presented here.

First of all, the gifted reader can be accelerated through reading skills and content. Bonds and Bonds (1983) suggest assessing the child's present level of achievement to identify specific strengths and weaknesses. Reis and Renzulli (1989) also suggest curriculum compacting to allow time for providing enrichment opportunities and experiences that match the gifted reader's abilities. By administering a pretest of reading skills that are to be mastered at a certain level, the teacher can diagnose what skills need to be taught and which skills do not need to be covered because of mastery. Literature-based reading can allow for such individualized instruction by providing a context for those skills that will prove more meaningful for the gifted reader. Consequently, valuable time will not be wasted on required drill and practice of skills already mastered (Reis and Renzulli, 1989). The gifted reader will therefore have more time to concentrate on other areas of the reading curriculum such as reading, creative thinking skills, and creative writing..

Second, the gifted reader should have a wide variety of literary resources. It is evident that a literature-based curriculum

meets this need by providing a wealth of literary resources. Polette and Hamlin (1980), Polette (1982), Brown & Rogan (1983), Bonds and Bonds (1983), Mangieri and Isaacs (1983), Dole and Adams (1983), Rupley (1984), Martin (1984), Schlichter (1984), Gallagher (1985), and Reis and Renzulli (1989) all stress the importance of providing a variety of literary resources because of individual interests and the content-richness of literature. As Martin suggests, students can complement their out-of-school interests and teachers can direct students to these reading materials. This involvement in literature can serve as a starting point in the development and maintenance of an interest in reading which was earlier diagnosed as being a problem for some gifted readers. Gallagher (1985) also mentions that no one textbook can satisfy the literary talents or needs of a gifted reader. He states that literature-based reading not only meets individual needs and interests, but also allows the matching of cultural backgrounds of a diverse population of gifted students. As Brown and Rogan (1983) point out, gifted readers need to read more widely. According to them, this can be accomplished through the use of trade books and literary works which a literature-based reading curriculum provides to a much greater degree than the basal text.

Third, the gifted reader needs to be given the opportunity to use self-selection and independent research. As Rupley (1984), Martin (1984), Schlichter (1984), Reis and Renzulli (1989), and

Polette (1982), Polette and Hamlin (1980) have expressed in their work, an important element in a reading curriculum is an allowance for students to research and select topics that are of interest to them. Literature-based reading allows this because of the wide variety of reading materials. It also helps to promote the teaching of research skills and promotes the idea of reading as a means for learning (Rupley, 1984). Schlichter, Reis and Renzulli (1989) point out that literature-based reading also helps to meet the needs of the Type III Enrichment Triad Model activity. The Type III activity is the third of the three types of enrichment activities in Renzulli's Enrichment Triad in which there is individual and small group investigations of real problems. They stress that a variety of books assist in the investigative aspects of the Type III activities. The need to investigate and do research in an area of self-selection is a very vital curricular need of the gifted reader, and literature-based reading appears to encourage the opportunity for doing it.

Brown and Rogan (1983), Rupley (1984), Martin (1984), Van Tassel-Baska (1989), Gallagher (1985), Polette (1982), and Polette and Hamlin (1980) all suggest the need to use higher level thinking skills in a reading curriculum. Literature-based reading provides the opportunity to implement and apply higher level thinking skills. Teacher-directed discussions with the use of open-ended questions are important strategies of the literature-based curriculum (Polette and Hamlin, 1980; Polette, 1982). Also, this approach encourages

focusing on books as a source of thoughts or ideas to be communicated to the reader. Critical reading, an important element of a literature-based reading program, allows the student to use higher cognitive abilities. Literature-based reading provides the context to develop these higher level thinking skills. For example, Adams and Rotandi (1990) suggest that through reading classic fairy tales, the gifted reader can evaluate the reality involved with each of the stories. They also can determine why certain animals were chosen for certain characters in the story, or the student could define the author's reason for writing the story. The reading of biographies allow students to compare alternative presentations of the life of an individual and try to conclude why the biographies written about one person may vary from biography to biography (Adams and Rotandi, 1990).

Finally, gifted readers need the opportunity to apply what has been learned in producing their own products and to apply what has been learned across the curriculum. Brown and Rogan (1983) suggest that reading a variety of books helps to solve one's own problems in life situations, and, as mentioned earlier by Rupley (1984), students realize that reading can be used as a means for learning, particularly in other subject areas. Martin (1984) suggests that literature-based reading encourages the gifted readers to be creative with the information they have gained by applying it to unique situations or problems and that it gives the students the opportunity to explore

ideas, issues, and themes with and across the different areas of an integrative curriculum. For example, the use of literature will encourage the understanding of a culture being studied in social studies by reading myths, folk tales, and fables from that culture (Gallagher, 1985). Reading this type of literature also allows the gifted reader to examine similarities and differences between people and cultures.

Polette and Hamlin (1980) and Polette (1982) stress that literature-based reading provides the context to develop the gifted reader's creativity by using strategies and techniques to build excitement and anticipation for the reading experience. Questioning strategies also can be implemented to develop creative thinking skills. Literature-based reading can provide literary models from which the gifted reader can develop his or her own creative writing skills.

What Are Suggestions for the Implementation of a Literature-Based Curriculum for the Gifted Reader?

After reviewing the current literature available on the teaching of reading for the gifted reader, there are at least three major strategies that can be suggested for the educators of this special group of students. First, the reading curriculum should be flexible. Second, it should provide teachers who have been inserviced and trained to teach the gifted reading curriculum. Third, it should

provide learning activities that challenge the intellect of gifted readers to keep them highly interested (Bonds and Bonds, 1983; Brown and Rogan, 1983; Mangieri and Isaacs, 1983; Reis and Renzulli, 1989; Marin, 1984; Schlichter, 1984). These strategies will be discussed in this section.

Flexibility of the gifted reading curriculum is of primary importance (Reis and Renzulli, 1989 Polette, 1982). Literature-based reading can fit the needs and interests of the gifted reader. However, it is important that the educator assess individual strengths and needs. This has been suggested as a vital part of a reading curriculum by Reis and Renzulli (1989) and Bonds and Bonds (1983). This allows curriculum compacting which eliminates work already mastered and also allows students to learn skills at an accelerated pace without being hindered by the pace of the average reading student. The assessment and identification of the gifted reader should be completed as early as possible to prevent boredom. This also allows the gifted reader time to read self-selected literature.

Interest assessment is also an integral part of providing a flexible reading curriculum. Reis and Renzulli (1989) and Martin (1984) suggest giving students a reading interest inventory to allow students to choose to read and research topics of their own choosing. This allows for a high level of student involvement that

helps to maintain interest and motivation. Literature-based reading provides the material to develop these interests and topics.

The need to meet a variety of interests also implies that an abundance and assortment of tradebooks needs to be available for the gifted readers. These can be provided by the school; or, if that does not seem feasible, the public library or the area education agency can help to provide an assortment and supply. It also is suggested by Mangieri and Isaacs (1983) that books used should be up-to-date and include books written in the last seven years so that they can meet current interests of children.

A strategy suggested by Reis and Renzulli (1989), Mangieri and Isaacs (1983), and Dole and Adams (1983), is that the teachers of the gifted readers need to be specially prepared to apply the strategies that are effective in instructing gifted readers to their full learning potential. Awareness of and strategies to deal with their special learning needs can be accomplished through the further education of these teachers. If a reading curriculum that meets the needs of a gifted reader is to be effective, teacher preparation is important (Mangieri and Madigan, 1984; Reis and Renzulli, 1989).

The literature seems to suggest that it is of prime importance that the reading curriculum for a gifted reader be challenging and productive. Martin (1984), and Dole and Adams (1983) stress the need for higher-level thinking skills and questioning. Dole and Adams (1983), Reis and Renzulli (1989), Bonds and Bonds (1983)

also suggest developing research skills and allowing independent projects and research. This helps to maintain a high level of student involvement and keeps them engaged in learning (Rupley, 1984). Creating products using the information that they have obtained keeps the gifted student challenged (Martin, 1984). Literature-based reading provides a perfect arena for this because of its unlimited possibilities and choices.

According to Polette (1982), Polette and Hamlin (1980), Rupley (1984), and Reis and Renzulli (1989), what all of this suggests is that educators have a major responsibility in implementing strategies to meet the differentiated needs of the gifted reader. By doing so, Polette's (1982) reading goals for the gifted reader, as mentioned in an earlier section, will be closer to achievement. A literature-based reading curriculum will help the regular classroom teacher or educator of the gifted meet the gifted reader's special needs and curriculum goals by using the strategies in the preceding discussion.

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

The review of the literature suggests that a problem exists in allowing a gifted reader to remain in a basal reading program while in a regular classroom situation. The gifted reader possesses unique

needs that require a differentiated reading curriculum, a curriculum that goes beyond the regular classroom reading curriculum. First, gifted readers need to have the opportunity to develop higher-level thinking skills through open-ended questioning techniques and also the opportunity to develop research skills. Second, the gifted reader also needs an individualized approach that allows for self-directed learning, self-selection, and acceleration through the material. Third, the gifted reader requires a chance to develop creativity by allowing additional time to practice skills of communication and creative expression. Finally, the gifted reader needs content novelty that may not be appropriate for the regular classroom curriculum.

The literature has suggested that the elements of a literature-based reading program help to meet and develop the differentiated curricular needs of the gifted reader. First, a literature-based reading curriculum provides a variety of literary resources that allows for self-selection to compliment the gifted readers' out-of-school interests and independent research. The variety of literature also can encourage interdisciplinary interests so that reading becomes a means for learning for the gifted reader. Second, literature-based reading provides a meaningful context in which to teach skills and content at an accelerated pace in order for the gifted reader to concentrate on other areas of reading, creative thinking, and creative writing. Third, literature-based reading provides examples of literature as a source of thoughts and ideas

which aid in implementing and applying higher order thinking skills. It can serve as a model for gifted readers in developing and in producing their own creative works. It also can aid in solving real life problems.

The literature has made suggestions in effectively implementing a literature-based reading curriculum for the gifted reader. The curriculum must be flexible in meeting the individual strengths and needs of the gifted reader. Curriculum compacting is an example of such flexibility. Interest assessments should be used as a means to encourage a high level of student involvement. The curriculum should provide an assortment and abundance of tradebooks to develop interests and needs. Since the gifted reader requires a differentiated curriculum, literature-based reading needs to remain challenging and productive for the gifted reader. Finally, there is a need for teachers to learn strategies that prove effective in developing and meeting the needs of the gifted reader.

Conclusions

It is evident from the literature that the gifted reader requires a differentiated curriculum that uses a literature base. As can be surmised from the review of the literature, literature-based reading is a realistic option in meeting the needs of a gifted reader. There appears to be a match between the needs of the gifted reader and the elements of a literature-based reading program.

One also can conclude that literature-based reading offers a meaningful framework for meeting the needs of the gifted reader in a differentiated reading curriculum. It can trigger and maintain a high interest and motivation in reading. It can help to exercise and nurture higher order thinking skills. More importantly, the gifted reader may be better able to use reading as a means for learning.

Another conclusion drawn from the literature is that the possibilities for an expanded reading curriculum are limitless because of the flexibility of a literature-based program. It allows the reading curriculum to be molded around the needs and interests of a gifted reader because of the wide variety of literary sources that can be utilized. The flexibility of literature-based reading also encourages the interdisciplinary approach to education that is currently being stressed by the educators of today. In addition, it provides an opportunity for the gifted reader to apply what has been learned by providing the time to produce literary products and to develop independent research skills. Flexibility is a definite need of a reading curriculum being implemented for a gifted reader, and literature-based reading appears to fit that need of flexibility.

This review of literature also can lead to the conclusion that a gifted reader needs a literature-rich curriculum. Literature-based reading provides literary models that set examples for the gifted reader. Literature can provide literary examples from which the gifted reader can develop his or her own literary works. In using

literary models, it permits the gifted reader to read and investigate the great literary minds of the past and present so that he or she may someday create the literature of the future. Literature-based reading also allows the gifted reader to identify with and understand the gifted minds of others which, in turn, allows the gifted reader to understand the uniqueness of himself or herself.

Based on current literature, one can conclude that a literature-based reading curriculum is a viable option for the gifted reader. The literature supports the idea of a hand with a perfectly fitted glove. The hand represents the needs of a gifted reader and the glove represents a literature-based reading curriculum fitting those special needs.

Recommendations

In reviewing the literature, there is a definite trend to use literature-based reading as the reading curriculum for the gifted reader. However, in implementing such a program, there remain areas of concern. Following are some recommendations to alleviate those concerns.

First, educators of the gifted reader must avoid the basalization of a literature-based program. Teachers need to be trained in effective strategies that differentiate the reading curriculum for the gifted reader when using literature. Sometimes teachers will teach reading using the techniques that they are

accustomed to in teaching a basal reading program such as assigning worksheets, asking lower level content questions, and writing dictionary definitions for vocabulary words. If the basal techniques are used for gifted readers, basalization of the literature will occur and the gifted reader possibly may be "turned off" to reading. Consequently, teachers of the gifted reader need to be educated in the effective implementation of a literature-based reading curriculum for the gifted reader.

This presents a second problem in implementing a literature-based curriculum for the gifted reader. Little has been done to develop a scope and sequence of content and skills for the literature-based reading curriculum for the gifted reader. There is a wealth of reading materials and activities created for the use of tradebooks, but there is no evidence of criteria to aid in the selection of materials for the gifted reader. There is a need for research, development and creation of a literature-based curriculum for the gifted reader at all levels.

Third, in reviewing current literature, no research was discovered which deals with the effects of literature-based reading on the reading achievement of the gifted reader. Not only should research on reading achievement be conducted, but it is recommended that an interest-in-reading survey be conducted to determine whether a literature-based program promotes an interest in reading for the gifted reader. This is necessary to prove or

disprove the assumption that literature-based reading really works for the gifted reader.

Fourth, the research presented on literature-based reading encourages heterogeneous grouping. It recommends grouping all students according to interests rather than ability grouping. From this researcher's viewpoint, if educators of the gifted readers truly want to differentiate the reading curriculum based on individual needs, they need to group gifted readers together. These groups, in turn, can then be regrouped according to their interests. Heterogeneous grouping may slow down the learning process for the gifted reader rather than enhancing it.

Finally, it is recommended that teachers of the gifted reader, whether in a regular classroom or in a gifted program, examine closely current reading programs. Are we truly challenging and nurturing the potential of these special students? If not, it is important that changes be implemented, not only in teaching strategies, but also in the reading curriculum. It is recommended that using the context of literature is a starting point from which educators of the gifted reader may begin.

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