

Thinking & Learning

Conference



CAROLYN COIL

Monday 25 May

**Challenging the Mindset of the
“Hidden” Underachiever**

Session 3

MELBOURNE

CAROLYN COIL

Carolyn (EdD) is an internationally known speaker and consultant who has worked in the field of education and training for over 30 years. She currently teaches courses in gifted education and does workshops for schools on a wide variety of topics. Carolyn has been adjunct professor at several universities and worked all over the world in places like Bermuda, Ecuador and China.



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Challenging the Mindset of the “Hidden” Underachiever

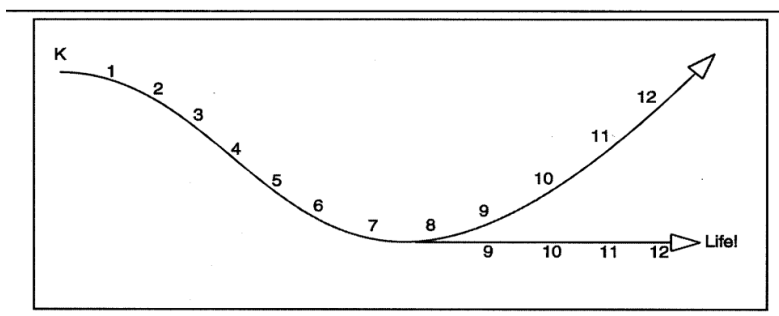
Presented by Carolyn Coil

at the Hawker Brownlow Teaching and Learning Conference

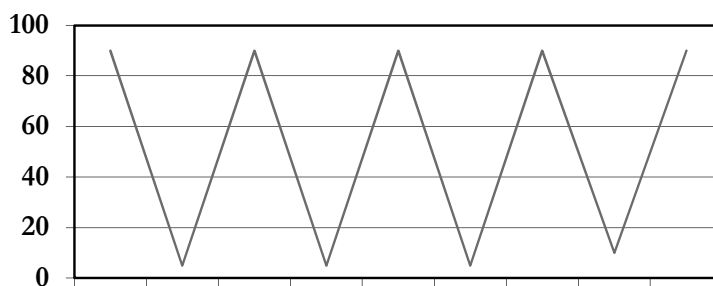
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Gifted students display underachievement in several different ways. Sometimes one child may demonstrate all three patterns within the span of a school year or two. More commonly, though, gifted underachievers tend to be one type and, without interventions, exhibit the same underachievement pattern throughout their school years.

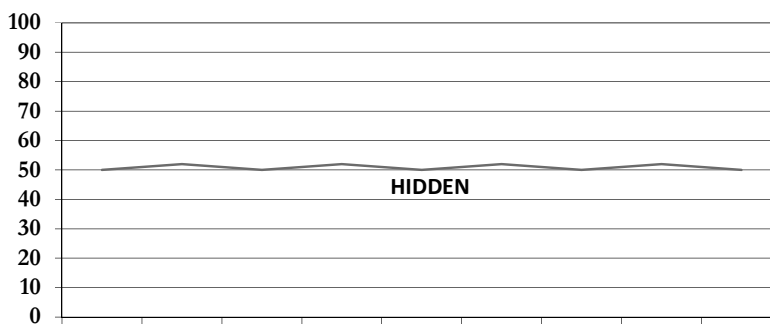
1. Does well in early grades with underachievement increasing as the child grows older



2. Sporadic, up-and-down pattern



3. No effort to go beyond the minimum



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Gifted Students and Underachievement

- These students often underachieve even in primary grades, but their underachievement may not show at that point because they enter school already knowing so much of the curriculum.
- Gifted underachievers do not learn how to do challenging work and do not learn needed organisational, time management and study skills.
- They perceive that school is easy and requires little work, thus when work is actually necessary they don't have the skills or work ethic to do it.

The Middle Years of Schooling

- The years where underachievement shows up most.
- Adolescence is in full swing with all of the social and emotional issues it entails.
- Some of these students have significant academic holes and don't have the background knowledge needed to be successful in school.
- Many don't know the skills to become an achiever: how to study, memorise unfamiliar information, listen and take notes, or learn organisational skills.
- Procrastination is often a problem.

Typical Mindsets Which May Lead to "Hidden" Underachievement

1. Expectation of the 'Easy A'
2. Feeling that teachers should be entertainers
3. Failure and mistakes are 'No-No's'
4. The 'Buy Now, Pay Later' syndrome
5. It isn't cool to be an achiever

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Strategies for Working with Hidden Underachievers

1. Use pre-assessment to find out what your gifted underachievers already know. Use that knowledge to compact and differentiate their curriculum.
2. Provide ways for hidden underachievers to track their own progress and encourage them to beat their own personal best.
3. Help underachievers understand the value and roles of different types of assessments.

| Standardized Assessment | Differentiated Assessment |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on everyone meeting the year- level standard • Compares one student to an group of students at the same age or year level • Testing and traditional school reports • Mostly summative assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on each student making individual progress • Compares one student to himself or herself over time • Differentiated projects, rubrics and non-traditional school reports • Mostly pre-assessment and formative assessment. |

4. Help students plan, adjust and reflect on long range assignments. (See attached page).
5. Raise the benchmark for gifted students by exposing them to others throughout the region or state via academic competitions, academic fairs, club affiliations, etc.
6. Praise students for their persistence and effort rather than for their intelligence and / or how smart / gifted they are. (Dr. Carol Dweck Study)
7. Do specific career or university counselling. Link present effort to future success.
8. Show your students real world connections and the benefits of acquiring high academic skills. Demonstrate as realistically as possible the links between success in school and success in life.

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9. Include questions that do not have one correct answer. Concentrate on higher level thinking and multiple possibilities. Use “What would happen if...?” questions to generate multiple responses.
10. Use quotes and stories from informational or literary texts to show that failures can become opportunities for learning. Use these as starters for journal writing, short stories, creative writing, reflective thinking, etc.
11. Have students learn about people who have overcome fear, failure and anxiety. Use the literature, films, current events and/or interviews with relatives, neighbors and friends. (See attached page).
12. *Discourage* the “Parent-to-the Rescue” syndrome.

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| RECORD OF WORK FOR PRODUCT PERFORMANCE | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| Date | Work Planned | Work Actually Done | Adjustments to Plan for Next Day | Reflections on my Work (Difficulties, strengths, surprises) |
| Monday | Find books and other information on the topic at home and at the library. | Found one book at home. My mum couldn't take me to the library. | Now I need to go to the library tomorrow. | My mum was too busy and she is making me get behind. I wish I could drive. |
| Tuesday | Take notes from all sources. See what's on the Internet that I could use. | Went to the library and found a book and 2 news articles. Surfing the Internet but didn't see anything useful. | I need to work on the notes tomorrow. | I saw a lot of cool stuff on the net but nothing that will help me with this report and project. |
| Wednesday | Begin writing rough draft. Plan visuals to go with written report. | Took notes from the books. Started making a collage. | I want to do the whole rough draft tomorrow. | My collage is good. It is turning out better than I thought. But I wish the rough draft was finished. |
| Thursday | Finish rough draft. Ask someone to proofread. Work on visuals. | Finished the collage. | Now I have to do the rough draft and the final report this weekend. | I hate homework on weekends. I leave the stuff I don't like to do until the last minute. |
| Weekend | Do final report. Finish visuals. Put together in folder. | Rough draft done. My dad proof-read it. I got my folder and decorated it. | I have to do the whole final written report on Monday night. | I wish this assignment was done. My collage is the best! |
| Monday | Check to make sure everything is ready to be handed in tomorrow. | Written report finished. Everything is in a folder. | I am ready to hand this in. | I'm glad the teacher made us plan a 'cushion day' in our projected work plan. That is the only reason this will be handed in on time. |

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Self-confidence

Interviewing an overcomer

A person who has overcome obstacles on the road to success:

Name of person: _____

Obstacle(s) overcome: _____

How it happened: _____

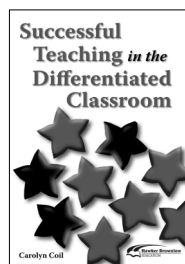
How this could be a model for my life: _____

My plan of action: _____

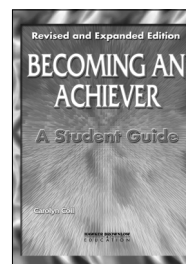


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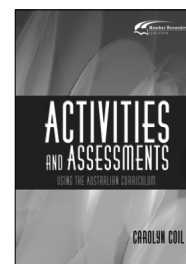
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| | POL6284 | Activities and Assessments Using the Australian Curriculum | \$39.95 |
| | HB6507 | Differentiation, Response to Intervention and Achievement: How They Work | \$35.95 |
| | HB6320 | Motivating Underachievers: 220 Strategies for Success (Revised and expanded edition) | \$32.95 |
| | POL3851 | creActivity x 4: Using the Common Core Standards | \$29.95 |
| | POL3868 | Differentiated Activities and Assessments Across the Australian Curriculum | \$39.95 |
| | POL3875 | Solving the Assessment Puzzle (Revised edition) | \$39.95 |
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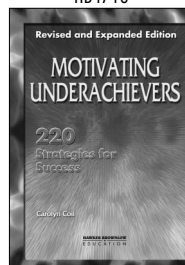
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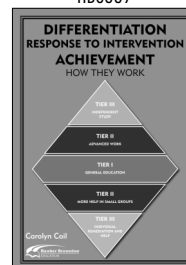
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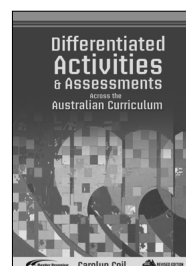
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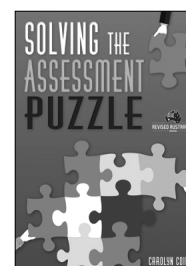
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