

## The Cognitive Domain

The Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor Domains constitute the whole of human behaviour. GEMINI will not address the Psychomotor Domain; this motor-skill area encompasses “talented” rather than “intellectual” giftedness and is beyond the scope of this manual.

Behaviours which fall within the Cognitive Domain are indicative of intellectual abilities and skills. The selection of areas comprising this domain was based upon the need for gifted students to be creative, independent in action, constructively critical in thought and effective in communicating ideas. Hence, the Cognitive Domain in GEMINI is divided into four areas: Independent Study, Critical Thinking, Creativity and Communication.

The emphasis of process over content in a gifted program does not imply that factual information is unimportant. It simply puts into perspective the need to mould thinkers who are able to act upon data rather than be constrained by it. In other words, education must facilitate a student’s ability to adapt readily to change. An individual can only begin to tap the tremendous amount of information which is accumulating and changing at an ever-increasing rate. Instead of attempting to master all this information, it is more important to establish a reasonable foundation of knowledge and to develop the skills necessary to retrieve further information as needed.

To cope with a changing world, the gifted student must learn how to function independently. GEMINI’s section on Independent Study includes the networks of Research, Problem-solving and Organisation.

Once these skills are developed, the student becomes free to examine the dynamics and interrelationships of ideas, to combine them, and finally to assess them. Critical Thinking—divided into the networks of Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation—comprises the second section of GEMINI.

Beyond independence and critical thinking, a gifted student must acquire the capacity to create new structures, to impose a unique order upon ideas and materials, and to be prolific in thought. The networks of Fluency, Flexibility, Elaboration and Originality encompass these abilities and they all fall within the category of Creativity. An individual who displays these characteristics is much more likely to deal with intellectual and personal problems effectively.

Finally, the ultimate goal of an independent, critical and creative thinker should be to share ideas with others. There would be little purpose to these ideas unless they were communicated in some way. Since the communication process is complex, GEMINI divides it into Verbal, Non-verbal, Interpretive, Interpersonal and Listening networks.

# Purpose

The purpose of GEMINI is twofold. Its first function, *differentiation*, is to provide educators with a detailed outline of curricular modifications appropriate for gifted students. It accomplishes this by describing six process-areas. The four within the Cognitive Domain are Independent Study, Critical Thinking, Creativity and Communication. Personal Growth and Motivational Development fall into the Affective Domain. These areas are further divided into twenty-three networks which form the framework for the more than four-hundred behaviours found in GEMINI.

In order to make a curriculum qualitatively different, the educator must know what types of program alternatives are suitable to meet the special needs and abilities of gifted students. Therefore, this manual identifies, defines and details a differentiated curriculum for gifted students. It establishes the framework for a gifted program. Too often there is no knowledge of which areas need to be stressed for students with superior intellectual capacities. Administrators and teachers often cannot pinpoint how they will be able to address the needs of the gifted. There must be a clear distinction between what is emphasised for average students. This is not to say that other students could not benefit from work in the areas outlined in GEMINI. It simply means that efforts for the highly able student must be concentrated along these lines. Since the ability to deal with abstractions is greater in the gifted, education must be modified accordingly.

The second purpose of GEMINI is to *assist in individualising the education of gifted students*. After establishing performance characteristics, behaviours can be selected around which an appropriate education program can be formed. GEMINI divorces itself from content and thus broadens its applicability to any subject, including social studies, science and language arts.

Instructional strategies based upon the behaviours in this manual can take many different forms. PEGASUS (Providing Enrichment for the Gifted: Adapting Selected Units of Study), a companion book to GEMINI, provides examples (more than three hundred) of instructional strategies which could be used to develop the behaviours listed in GEMINI.

GEMINI, therefore, should be viewed as a resource manual which facilitates the process of differentiating and individualising educational programs for gifted students. Its contents can be applied to various educational settings, developmental levels and instructional areas.

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