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# INTRODUCTION

When this author first began teaching, two of the many questions he kept asking himself were: “Are these students really gifted or are they just pleasing me?” and “Why was the author wanting to distinguish between these two types of students?”

One reason was that these two types of students have very different needs to be satisfied. Each student is in school to learn how best to use his/her abilities, to be adequately prepared for his/her vocation, to achieve his/her greatest emotional satisfaction, and to be an asset to the world community. Helping them meet these needs was, and still is, the broad basic goal of a teacher. If the author was to attain that goal, then he had to find ways to learn which student was which.

Another reason was that the author wanted to be satisfied with himself. He did not want to be just a good teacher, but a good teacher by his standards. He felt, and still does, that each student is entitled to the very best each of us can be.

Therefore a process of learning began that has brought to light several interesting observations. These observations and some techniques are the basis for this work.

This handbook will assist you in determining an answer to the question: Is this student potentially gifted or a teacher pleaser? The author does not presume to reveal anything unknown. Instead, he will show how knowledge that you possess will work in helping you to answer that question.

The need is not to identify really bright/gifted students, but to distinguish between the potentially gifted student and the teacher pleaser. This author truly believes that many potentially gifted students are never approached at their level of instruction; hence, they do not receive the best we have to offer. The same is true for the student who is basically a teacher pleaser; therefore, this text is a beginning not an end.

**The author is desirous that you:**

- (1) Be patient;**
- (2) Don't expect immediate "perfect" results;**
- (3) Realize that this is the author's technique developed over a long period of time;**
- (4) Practice the suggested techniques as you would any other lesson; and**
- (5) Practice with the students. They will benefit from the experience as much as you.**

# **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this handbook then are:

- (1) to assist the classroom teacher in becoming more comfortable in working with bright students, teacher pleasers, and potentially gifted students;
- (2) to assist the classroom teacher in becoming a more patient and observing teacher;
- (3) to identify some known characteristics of the Teacher Pleaser;
- (4) to identify some known characteristics of the Potentially Gifted;
- (5) to assist the classroom teacher in using the information contained in this handbook;
- (6) to assist the classroom teacher in improving his/her individual skills; and
- (7) to identify each type of student so that the needs of each can best be met.

## A STARTING POINT: LABELING

Since this treatise is about Gifted/Talented students, it is appropriate that you understand what the author means by Gifted/Talented students.

A **Gifted** student is one who possesses many different Talents. When these Talents are used, whether singly or together, the success or achievement is well above normal expectations.

A **Talented** student is one who possesses a Talent. When the Talent is used, the success or achievement is well above normal expectations.

Talents are specialized areas in man's social structure. Examples of Talents would be: painting, dramatics, mathematics, music, poetry, playwriting, leadership, analysis, evaluation, ceramics, auto-mechanics, and so on.

Notice that there are many Talents in a society. Notice also that these Talents vary according to the society and the technology available to that society. Hence, a stone-cutter in the society of primitive man was a very Talented person. His skill in cutting stones to specific shapes for specific uses was exceptional or well above normal expectations. Today, stone cutting is still a specialty or Talent. But technology has advanced; therefore the need for a stone cutter is different. Nevertheless, it is still a Talent.

This author does not expect you to blindly accept the working definitions above. They are his. He owns them. The author **does** ask you to use them as the basis for what follows.

Many times this author has been asked, "Why do we as teachers label students?" The response has always been sim-