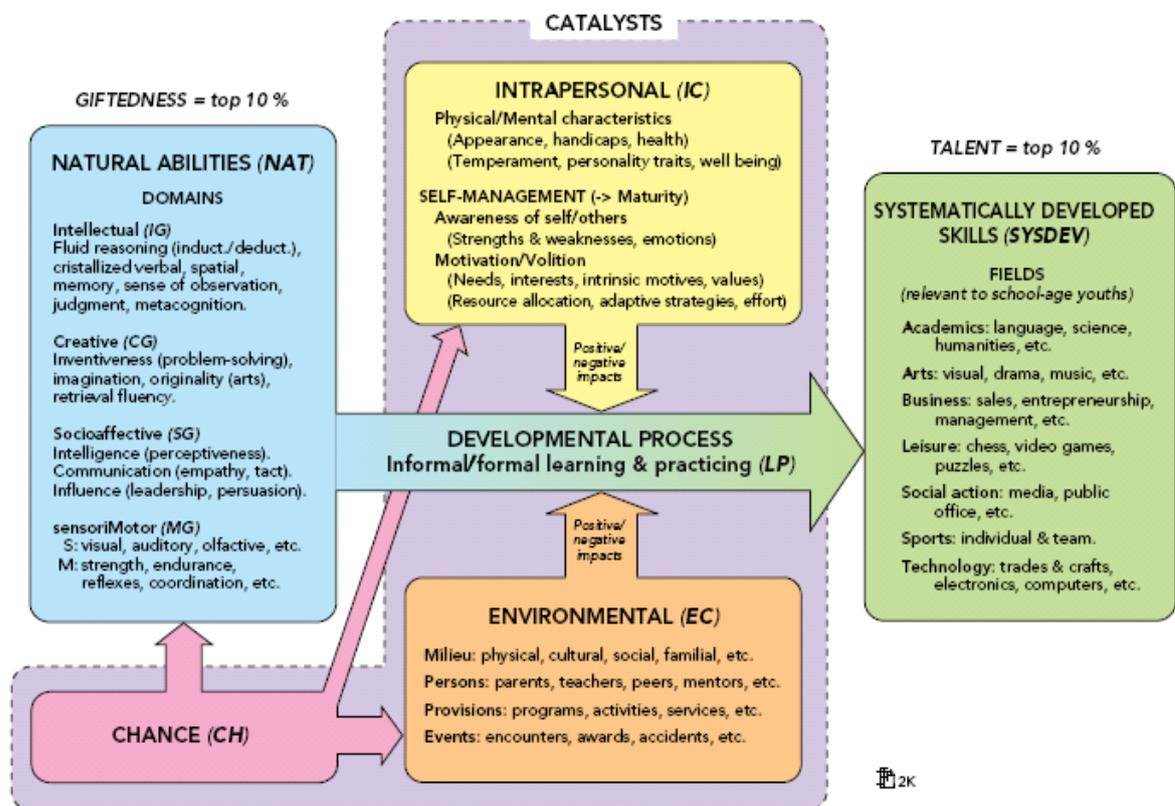


UNDERSTANDING GIFTED LEARNERS AT THE MAC.ROBERTSON GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

Gagné's Differentiated Model of Gifted and Talented

There are many models for defining the gifted learner; however Gagne's Model differentiates between what it means to be gifted and what it means to be talented. This is widely accepted as the model to be used in education by academics in the field of gifted education. Our challenge at Mac.Rob is to support intellectually gifted and academically talented students to pursue their individual excellence.

Figure 1. Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent



Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT.US.2003)

Gagné states that:

Giftedness refers to a student's outstanding potential and ability in one or more domains, (e.g. intellectual, creative, socio-affective and sensori-motor). Talent refers to outstanding performance in one or more fields of human activity. Talent emerges from ability as a consequence of the student's learning experience (1991, p.3).

The Characteristics of gifted learners

What characteristics or behaviours might be seen in children who possess the natural abilities which we have come to associate with giftedness? VanTassel-Baska (1998) and Silverman (1993) suggest that if a child demonstrates more than three-quarters of the following traits presented in Table 1 it is likely that he or she is gifted:

Table 1: Characteristics of Gifted Learners adapted from Silverman (1993) & Van Tassel-Baska (1998)

good problem solving/reasoning abilities	high degree of energy
rapid learning ability	preference for older companions
extensive vocabulary	wide range of interests
excellent memory	great sense of humor
long attention span	early or avid reading ability
personal sensitivity	concerned with justice and fairness
compassion for others	at times, judgment seems mature for age
perfectionism	keen powers of observation
intensity	vivid imagination
moral sensitivity	high degree of creativity
unusual curiosity	tends to question authority
persevering when interested	shows ability with numbers
good at visual puzzles	asks probing questions
shows good judgment and logic	produces original or unusual ideas
understands relationships	has complex thoughts

When planning and delivering curriculum at Mac.Robertson Girls' High School we aim to reflect on the following:

- What is the prior knowledge/ entry point of the students into the learning?
- Are the lessons challenging?
- Is the pace of delivery appropriate? (twice the depth, twice the pace mantra)
- Are we scaffolding the learning so that all students can see the pathway?
- Are we incorporating ICT at a high level?
- Are we building relationships and helping our girls to build relationships with each other?
- Do the students have an opportunity to work independent and collaboratively?
- What makes this learning authentic to our girls as adults in a future world?
- Are we sharing with other staff for a consistent and richer approach?

References:

- Gagne, F. (2003). Transforming Gifts into Talents: The DMGT as a developmental theory. Handbook of Gifted Education. N. D. G. Colangelo. Boston, Allyn & Bacon Publishers.
- Silverman, L., K. (1993). Counselling the Gifted & Talented. Denver, Colorado, Love Publishing Company.
- Van Tassel-Baska, J. (1998). Excellence in Educating Gifted & Talented Learners. Denver, Colorado, Love Publishing Company