

An Anthology of Critical Works

Gifted & ADVANCED BLACK STUDENTS IN SCHOOL



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FOREWORD

Alexinia Y. Baldwin, Ph.D.
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When I first began my job as a teacher, I was aware of the variety of abilities of the children in my class. It was during segregation, so programs that were provided to White gifted students did not exist for Black gifted students. This inadequacy disturbed me greatly because there were many students in my classes who exemplified gifted characteristics. The articles in this anthology by Martin D. Jenkins (1936, 1943, 1948, 1950) show that concern for giftedness among Black students was addressed very early in publications that focused on Black issues. Although there was evidence of giftedness in this population, very few published articles were available that emphasized possibilities and the urgency for attention to this concern in public schools and teacher training institutions.

In 1965, preceding the desegregation of schools, I became the teacher of the first class for gifted Black students in grades 5–8 in a large school district. For many years, there had been classes and programs for gifted students who were White, but none had been provided for Black students. The data collected on identification procedures and program activities for these students while they were in the classes, along with longitudinal data on their development into adults, showed how important it was to provide opportunities for Black students to be identified and included in programs for the gifted. This anthology draws attention to the continued lack of inclusion of Black students in programs for the gifted throughout the last century. It gives those who are working to make a change in program planning a philosophical approach for influencing the processes for identifying and planning for the inclusion of gifted Black students in programs for the gifted.

The increased interest in the status of minority pupils in programs for the gifted makes this anthology an excellent source to relay the decades of thoughts, dreams, and recommendations for future recognition of giftedness within the Black population. The articles included are not based solely on the timeline when authors began to express concerns about this lack of attention to gifted Black students. They are a compendium of articles based on the range of discussion in which each gives a flavor of the concern and demand for attention to this valuable and overlooked ability source. In the current explosion of written materials and docu-

ments, it is easy for the articles included here to become archived and left out of the current discussion. This anthology is a valuable resource because it gives the reader a range of thoughts over a period of 72 years.

The articles included here have been selected to give a broad range of areas in which there has often been resistance to change in thinking regarding the inclusion of Black students in programs for the gifted. These areas are identification, curriculum design, administrator and teacher attitudes, creativity, the definition of giftedness, and parental and community roles. These are articles and thoughts from authors who themselves are minorities, thus lending credence to the professional observations that have been made through the years. The articles that are included in this publication have been featured in reputable publications both within the field of gifted education and outside of the field.

The editors of this compendium are to be commended on the organization of the anthology, which gives the reader a chance to select the time, author, and area of concern without having to go through the entire publication. It is my hope that the attention that this anthology draws to the concerns of the various authors will inspire further research and planning ideas for new scholars of all racial groups who are just becoming involved in education—and particularly education of the gifted.

PROLOGUE

In late 2009, the coeditors of this anthology met prior to the National Association for Gifted Children's annual conference to discuss—and vent about—the impact of our efforts to address the underidentification of Black students as gifted and their subsequent underrepresentation in gifted education programs. No one knew what outcomes to expect; there was no meeting agenda nor any individual or collective goals to build upon, but many concerns about the status of Black youth and their achievement consumed our conversation. We were all frustrated that too little progress was being made to reverse underrepresentation and increase Black student enrollment in gifted programs; our efforts to address these issues over the years seemed to have been in vain. It became clear that although we had worked together in dyads or triads in workshops and on publications (e.g., articles, chapters, studies), our efforts needed to be combined and become more formalized. With this agreement in mind, the Consortium of African American Scholars (CAAS) in gifted education was formed. We are saddened to say that no such group has existed in gifted education; one was long overdue. Yet we are proud and happy to take on the challenges needed to redress inequities in gifted education for Black students.

The members of CAAS, all coeditors of this anthology, come from many walks of life, but we all share the desire—personal and professional—to desegregate gifted education and to recruit and retain African American students in gifted education programs. We have been raised and educated in urban and suburban communities; as children, our family demographics ranged from low income to high income and included married, single, and divorced parents—some with only a high school diploma, and others with advanced or terminal degrees from colleges and universities. Regardless of our backgrounds, we have all overcome insurmountable odds to achieve career success, and we believe that many other Black students from all walks of life can overcome and experience greater school success, which leads to greater career success.

This book, an anthology of seminal works focusing on gifted Black student issues, represents a labor of love. In the midst of frustration triggered by education's slow progress to meet the needs of gifted Black students, members of CAAS paused to galvanize our collective strengths to begin to capture in a new way a culmination of our gifted education experiences, which represent a range of a few

years to two decades. At our meeting in 2009, we rightfully vented much of our frustration over the years, and shared recommendations, solutions, and resources to address inequities related to Black students in gifted education. We are exhausted with feeling vexed and frustrated, as too little progress has been and is being made regarding underrepresentation among Black students in gifted education. Therefore, this anthology represents our collective desire to help the field of education move purposefully and deliberately forward to experience greater success in recruiting and retaining Black students in gifted education.

Black students' inequitable representation in gifted education has a relatively long history, as evidenced by the studies of Martin D. Jenkins, perhaps the first (and only) scholar to consistently focus on Black students with extremely high IQ test scores. His work has mostly been overlooked in the history of gifted education. His scholarship on gifted Black students is not the only work to be neglected, as research by Drs. E. Paul Torrance, Asa G. Hilliard, III, and Robert L. Williams, to name a few, has also tended to be excluded from discussion. Further, the field of gifted education owes much to the scholarship of Drs. Alexinia Y. Baldwin and Mary M. Frasier, who devoted their lives to the issue of underrepresentation. These "mothers" of gifted education for Black students have given the field a legacy that helps keep CAAS members focused and committed to gifted education. Standing on the shoulders of Baldwin and Frasier, no one has been as vocal, prolific, and consistent in calling attention to concerns and recommendations than our senior colleague, Dr. Donna Y. Ford. She is the creator of what we proudly call multicultural gifted education. These three great women have indeed given birth to scholarship on gifted Black students and raised our field to another level in its capacity to understand and meet their needs. Baldwin, Frasier, and Ford have mentored thousands of teachers, counselors, administrators, parents, policy makers, and undergraduate and graduate students, as well as Black students in K–12 schools. The articles in this anthology of scholarship—historical and contemporary—comprise a one-of-a-kind tribute to their legacy. There is no other work that takes readers through a journey that tells the story of Black students' participation (or lack thereof) in gifted education. In sharing scholarly articles, we focus on topics, issues, and challenges associated with being culturally responsive and equitable. This includes various aspects of identification, assessment, characteristics of atypical giftedness, creativity, and more.

A number of assumptions and propositions guided this selection of readings. Specifically, we believe without apology, that:

- ❖ underrepresentation is inequitable and unnecessary;
- ❖ all groups are equally endowed in intelligence, academic ability, and creativity; thus, no group should have a monopoly on being identified and served as gifted;

- ❖ underrepresentation can decrease when the focus is on recruitment and retention;
- ❖ teachers and educators (due to low expectations and deficit thinking) are the major contributors to underrepresentation, but substantive and purposeful professional development and courses can change this;
- ❖ creative strengths reveal gifted potential;
- ❖ traditional tests and instruments are a major contributor to underrepresentation, and alternative tests and instruments can increase Black students' representation;
- ❖ policies and procedures that contribute to and sustain underrepresentation must be interrogated and changed; and
- ❖ underrepresentation can be corrected.

Of course, not every piece of scholarship could be included in this book. Thus, we developed a few criteria for inclusion, with the most important being that the author had shown *consistent* commitment to fighting underrepresentation. It was also the opportunity to showcase neglected scholars such as those listed above. This volume, divided into seven sections and totaling 26 works, by no means tells the entire story of Black children and gifted education. Recognizing that there is so much more to understand and explain, we intend for this to be the first of a series of volumes on understanding and educating gifted Black students.

Section I provides a historical context and background regarding Black students and gifted education, relying on the voices of Frasier, Baldwin, and Ford to set the stage. Section II focuses on creativity, intelligence, and Black students, paying considerable attention to the extensive work of E. Paul Torrance. In this section, we argue that the field's focus on Torrance's contributions in creativity has neglected his call for attention to gifted Black students.

Section III, *Discovering Gifted Potential in Black Students*, informs readers what must be done to get beyond deficit thinking in order to discover, value, and nurture gifts and talents in Black students. Highly gifted Black students are the focus of Section IV. Here, Martin D. Jenkins' extensive and neglected body of work is showcased. Not surprisingly, Section V covers the assessment of Black intelligence. In it, we tackle the thorny issue of the pitfalls and promises of testing and assessing Black students. Particular attention is given to equitable assessment policies and practices and nonverbal measures. Section VI focuses on a concept that Donna Y. Ford introduced to the field in the early 1990s—recruitment *and* retention. Her rationale is clear—not only must we find ways to increase access to gifted education, but we must also ensure Black students' success once identified and placed. The final section builds upon and goes beyond our past and current status, and is titled *The Future of Gifted Education for Black Students*. It is important for us to learn from the past: What has not worked? What is not working? What

things did and do work? What can be tweaked to work more effectively? What research questions and issues must be considered that contribute to our current knowledge base? What frameworks and methods show promise for future scholarship on gifted Black students? The future rests extensively on honest reflections, the will to change, and taking action to improve the education for gifted Black students in terms of excellence and equity. To wit, as Ford has stressed in a number of ways, “A mind is not only a terrible thing to waste” (The United Negro College Fund’s motto), and a mind is a terrible thing to erase. *Everyone* suffers when gifted Black students are overlooked or denied, regardless of the reason—all students should be given an opportunity to reach their potential and to participate in high-quality gifted programs.

When compiling this volume, the editors and publisher took care to reproduce the content of each article as it originally appeared, including the form, grammar, style, and so forth. The only changes to the original text were for consistency within and between chapters related to the formatting style (i.e., making headings, sub-headings, and titles for figures and tables aligned with current APA style).

CHAPTER 8

Undiscovered Diamonds: The Minority Gifted Child

Alexina Y. Baldwin

A disproportionately low number of minority students have been identified and placed in programs for gifted students. The realities of the situation relate to the attitudes of planners and teachers, the identification process itself, inadequate research verifying the use of appropriate identification tools, and an inadequate picture of how a program should be designed.

Empirical research on identification and planning for the minority gifted child is sparse but that which is available highlights the need for more extensive research in this area. Exploratory research using The Raven Matrices and chronometric devices as part of the identification process appear to hold promise for developing new hypotheses and proving or disproving those that are presently proposed. More flexibility of planning, more funding for research, more dissemination of information, and improved teacher training on how to recognize clues for identifying exceptional intellectual processing abilities are among the recommendations proposed here to alleviate the problem of discovering the gifted among minority populations.

The intersection of the four words—undiscovered, diamonds, minority and gifted establishes a focal point from which one can view the loss of value to the world, our country, and the individual when attention is not given to the discovery and nurturance of the minority gifted child.

The paradigm used for discussing this issue is one which could be used as a framework for discussing the lack of proportionate representation of other minorities in programs for the gifted. The elements of the paradigm are as follows:

1. Statement of the problem
2. Definition of terms

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3. Realities on concerns of the situation
4. Conceptualization and research
5. Recommendations for action

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There is an increasing concern about the lack of minorities in programs for the gifted. Many proponents of the gifted such as Passow (1977), Gallagher (1985), and Baldwin (1985) have addressed the problem through books, conferences and articles. There are few easy answers to the problem because established norms for identifying and planning for the gifted are hard to alter in light of the paucity of supportive data for recommending substantive changes.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

For purposes of this discussion, minority gifted children will be defined as those who are Black, Hispanic, or American Indian. The undiscovered diamonds among these groups of children are those who because of cultural differences, socioeconomic deprivation, or geographic isolation, do not respond to the standard educational stimuli.

The term gifted as used here is perceived to be evidence of above average ability, creative-processing ability and task commitment in one or a combination of four areas: Cognitive, Creative Products, Psychosocial, and Psychomotor (Baldwin, 1984). This perception is based on the following assumptions:

1. That giftedness can be expressed through a variety of behaviors.
2. That giftedness expressed in one area, as defined above, is just as important as giftedness expressed in another, and
3. That all populations have gifted children who exhibit behaviors that are indicative of giftedness.

The term “undiscovered diamonds” is used as a simile to express the idea that among the minority populations there are ability resources of high value which are being untapped. According to census information and predictions by demographers concerning population growth, by the year 2000, one out of three Americans will be nonwhite and at least 53 U.S. cities will have become predominantly nonwhite (Education Week, 1986). The amount of attention given to finding the diamonds among minority groups and the type of educational experiences given them today will determine their creative and productive levels in the future.

REALITIES TO CONSIDER

Among the many considerations that are directly related to the problems of inclusion of minorities in programs for the gifted are: attitude, identification, and program/curriculum.

ATTITUDES

The attitude of those individuals who have the responsibility for designing educational programs for gifted students, the attitude of some minority communities toward the concept of giftedness, and the attitude of some legislators regarding constituent priorities can negatively affect the process of discovering these diamonds.

The attitudes of program planners is, in part, based upon the degree of acceptance of the foregoing assumptions regarding giftedness. Concomitantly, attitudes are shaped by the degree of knowledge concerning the variables which affect the ability of many minorities to respond to traditional identification criteria. It is important to realize that attitudes toward planning for the development of unique abilities among minority students are often derived from the realities planners face in attempting to adjust the organizational patterns of educational settings to the unique needs and abilities of these children. These organizational patterns often do not allow the flexibility of planning or the necessary resources for adequately meeting the requirements of programs for gifted minorities. A minority child whose school achievement scores are low but who possesses exceptionally creative ability in the graphic or performing arts, for instance, may well need special attention directed to a weakness in the academic area as well as special attention to the development of the special gifts of creativity. Many schools cannot provide this type of educational plan, consequently, little attention will be given to considering these areas of giftedness. Very often creativity is the dimension through which minority gifted children express their exceptional abilities.

The attitude of persons and groups, external to the immediate school environment, toward education of the gifted can also affect programs for minority gifted students. In minority communities of large urban areas, programs for the gifted are considered "elitist." Their assessment of gifted programs is based upon their observation that these programs include very few minority children. As a result of this perception, many legislators who represent the constituents of these communities find it necessary to argue against the use of state funds for developing programs for the gifted (G. Poshard, personal communication, November 25, 1986).

IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Although identification is a separate aspect of the concern for minority gifted students, it is inextricably tied to the attitudes of program planners as pointed out in the previous paragraphs. Subjective as well as objective techniques for identification of minority students is often necessary in order to diminish the effect of external variables on their ability to do well on objective tests. If program planners consider objective tests of cognitive ability as the most effective means of identifying gifted students, many minority students will not be identified.

In many states the problem of identification is exacerbated because state funding for gifted programs is based upon the number of students identified at or above certain IQ or academic achievement scores. These quantitative data are more easily defended and explained by and for the legislators but the need for this type of data erodes efforts to use qualitative measures to locate minority gifted students. Furthermore, school districts and legislators argue that the curriculum for the gifted student is based upon evidence of their ability to excel in the “regular” courses offered in educational institutions.

In spite of these restrictive criteria for state funding, the use of subjective measures in the identification of gifted students has been recommended by many professionals. This technique has been shown to be successful in its use with minority students (Baldwin, 1977). In the last few years, however, evidence of the increased need to satisfy legal complaints regarding inclusion or exclusion of children in programs for the gifted has made the process of identification a cause for concern. In some school districts such as San Antonio, TX and Seattle, WA program planners have even been called upon to prepare a legal defense of the identification techniques used. The reality of expenses and time involved will tend to cause school districts to eliminate subjective techniques as part of their identification process. If school districts revert to using only standardized tests for the identification of gifted students, the problem of locating minority gifted children will unfortunately increase.

PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM PLANNING FOR THE MINORITY GIFTED

The realities to be discussed under program planning and curriculum are related to both the student attitude and the identification process. If a minority student is selected for the program for the gifted, problems of appropriately designed curriculum often surface. While some students of the minority population will have little or no difficulty with a program which stresses academic giftedness, some will need special planning which will accommodate their special strengths. Thus, a child whose profile shows strengths in leadership and creativity might not be able to use these strengths if a program is not designed to enhance these abilities.

Disenchantment on the part of the teacher and student regarding the student's progress could then result.

PRESENT CONCEPTUALIZATIONS AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

Having faced these realities and concerns, it is important that some conceptualization and research strategies which are related to attitude, identification, and programs be discussed.

ATTITUDES

The changing concept of intelligence as measured by IQ scores has positively affected attitudes concerning the presence of abilities among minorities even when standardized scores indicate differently. Raven & Summers (1986), for example, have explained that:

use of deviation IQs tends to give users the impression that the concept of IQ has a greater explanatory, diagnostic, and prescriptive power than it has. . . . assignment of an IQ tends to give users the impression that there is much greater stability and uniformity in human development than there is. . . . the closer we get to uni-dimensional measures, the more we discover that human, and particularly educated, abilities are distributed in this way. (p. 7)

Sternberg (1984) admonishes us to look at the test we use with an eye toward analyzing the relationship of these tests to the people we are serving. In his words,

Tests work for some people some of the time, but they do not work for other people much of the time. Moreover, the people for whom they do not work are often the same again and again. Applied conservatively and with full respect to all of the available information, tests can be of some use. Misapplied or overused, they are worse than nothing . . . In the meantime, we must remember that the fact that test score is (or appears to be precise) does not mean that it is valid (p. 14).

Gardner (1983) has proposed that we look for multiple intelligences. Gardner's proposal is far-reaching in view of the traditional use of much more limited standardized criteria which relates primarily to basic skills in school.

A review of the conceptualizations which generated these writings point to an attitudinal change in the perception of abilities which in turn should affect positively the attitudes of planners toward the identification of gifted minority students and provisions made for the development of these abilities.

MINORITY DROPOUTS

Attitudes toward the idea that there are gifted students among school dropouts is slowly changing. For those persons who tend to be more conservative in their definition of giftedness the presence of giftedness among minority dropouts is antithetical to their thinking. Douglas (1969), however, indicated that 20% of the dropout students included in his study were gifted. Today the dropout rate among minorities is at an all time high. Data show that in New York for instance, this rate for African Americans is 53%, Latinos 62%, and Native Americans 46 % (African American Institute of SUNY, 1986).

Even so, New York's dropout rate is not the highest in the country. Unfortunately empirical data are not available to replicate Douglas' finding using 1980–86 dropout statistics. However, if a rule of thumb is applied to existing dropout data to estimate the number of gifted minorities among the dropouts, this number would be significant. The loss of this talent alone is enough cause for concern without considering those students who have remained in school but are underachieving.

The concept of developing the abilities of minorities and the importance of attention being focused on academic as well as nonacademic abilities were recommended by Dubois (1903) and Washington in his recently reprinted book *Up From Slavery* (1971). Quite often the exceptional abilities other than those traditionally recognized as legitimate areas of giftedness are not included in the regular program for the gifted. This lack of recognition does not, however, apply to those minorities who show exceptional athletic ability!

A plausible yet untested assumption about giftedness is that this quality of ability will be expressed in some manner within or outside of the traditional educational setting. In an effort to explain the reason for the lack of minorities in the programs for the gifted one might be tempted to equate this lack of inclusion with the lack of females in mathematics. An attempt to justify this comparison could be done by attributing the presence of more males than females in programs for mathematics, the presence of more blacks than whites in team sports, or the presence of more whites than minorities in programs for the gifted, to the amount of practice each included group devoted to the skills needed for the particular area. This type of justification tends to perpetuate the myths regarding each group. Instead, a closer look at the expectations or lack of expectations of these comparative groups should be taken. Herein could lie the actual cause of unequal representation.

The manner in which this ability will be exhibited will vary according to the type of academic and nonacademic experiences the child had during its formative years. The challenge for the school is to harness and develop this ability.

Attitudes about the additional time and thought necessary for insuring the inclusion of minority gifted students in programs are shaped by the new pressure on school districts to become paragons of excellence. This pressure had decreased the flexibility in planning that many schools would need in order to adequately plan and develop programs for many of the gifted minority students.

New York State for instance, has increased the number of required hours in specified subject areas. Other states have made similar adjustments to satisfy these needs (Mueller and McKeown, 1986). In the opinion of Futrell (1986),

Our schools today are structurally decrepit, still shaped by an organizational model appropriate to 19th century industry. That model does little to enliven the imagination. It does much to stifle innovation. . . . It does much to intensify isolation.” (p. 6)

IDENTIFICATION STRATEGIES

There is increasing interest in the appropriate identification strategies that should be used to select minority gifted students. In the last decade, there has been a general consensus that multi-dimensional screening is the preferred method for identifying gifted students. This acceptance opens the possibility for the selection of instruments and techniques which will more appropriately identify the gifted among minorities.

Although multidimensional screening holds great promise for selecting minority students, it does not guarantee that they will be identified. The Baldwin Identification Matrix (BIM) for example was designed to include a wide array of assessment strategies which would tap a wide range of gifted behaviors. The first edition of the BIM did not outline the categories of gifted behaviors to be assessed nor did it provide a mechanism for giving equal weighting to these areas. It was left to the planners to include these categories and select the appropriate instrument for assessment. An analysis of data received from the research in progress (Baldwin, 1985) on the use of the BIM revealed that in spite of the wide array of inclusions, the BIM users had placed more emphasis on the traditional academic areas. The data show that the most predictive instruments for selection were: Standardized Achievement Test scores, IQ scores, Teacher ratings, and the Cognitive Processing tests (Raven Progressive Matrices and the SOI Abilities Test).

In school districts where minorities were well represented in programs for the gifted, creativity and leadership were good predictors of selection. Tests of cre-

ativity, teacher, parent, and peer rated leadership scales were used as part of the identification process (Blackshear, 1979; Dabney, 1983). The design of the second edition of the BIM—Baldwin Identification Matrix 2 Baldwin, (1984)—specifies more clearly the categories which should be included in the BIM profile and provides a mechanism for giving equal weight to each of these categories. Subjective as well as objective measures are recommended for use. (A compendium of optional test selections under each category of the definition used is available from the author.) There has been an increased use of the Raven Progressive Matrices (RPM) as a measure of intellectual processing skills. The most recent research supplement (Raven & Summers 1986) included American norming data. Populations of Blacks, Hispanics, Navajo Indians, and Asians were included in the norming process although limitations in selecting the sample groups was noted by the authors.

A preliminary review of the data secured by Baldwin and Start (1986) using children (N = 51) from a socioeconomically disadvantaged black population indicates that aside from the 10 children who were included in the academically talented class 11 others had equivalent or higher scores on the RPM. Additional measures on these 11 children will be analyzed. It appears, however, that the use of this test can certainly bring to the attention of planners, children who might be missed using other means. This is an example of the type of data which can be included on the BIM profile.

Another aspect of this project by Baldwin and Start included the use of Reaction Time (RT) as an analytic chronometric technique in cognition. This research ties into the increasing number of studies on reaction time in the analysis of individual differences and the relationship of the speed of encoding to the mental ability of the individual. Phillip Vernon (1986) among others has been actively involved in the renewal of this concept. This research will hopefully hold promise for identifying the mental abilities of individuals exclusive of their experiences or ethnic backgrounds. Since little research is available on the identification of gifted minority students a few studies that have pointed out some of the problems are referenced again and again. Stallings (1970) developed an environmentally sensitive testing instrument whose items were derived from the radius of the urban child's community. Thus, street signs, churches, barber-shops, store fronts, etc., were used to measure recall. Data from the attempts to standardize the strategies used are not available but the concept of Stallings' project developed from his theory that since traditional methods of testing use recall of facts in manipulating data, the assessment of this ability to recall information should be tested using familiar objects. Stallings emphasizes the use of this approach for teacher-made assessment strategies along with the regular standardized techniques for identification.

As a result of his research, Hilliard (1976) has suggested that identification criteria for the minority student include qualities such as alertness, energy, confidence, humor, expressiveness, experimentation, social control, verbal creativity, and risk-

taking. Hilliard did not suggest the type of instrumentation that could be used for surfacing these traits merely that it is important to include these qualities as part of the observations strategies used by teachers.

Mercer (1971) developed the System of Multipluralistic Assessment (SOMPA), an instrument designed to accommodate the variables which might affect the functioning level of Mexican-American children. SOMPA has been successful in giving the minority child the equivalent IQ scores needed for entering programs for the gifted.

Meeker (1979) has developed the Atypical Screening Form of the SOI Learning Abilities Test. Unpublished research by Baldwin (1985) indicated that the use of this test with minority students who were highly verbal penalized them if this was the only test being used. The test did, however, locate some children who would not have been identified by using other processes.

Additional articles concerning strategies used for identifying the gifted minorities can be found in articles written by Bernal & Reyna (1974), Blackshear (1979), Boothy & Lacoste (1977), and Bruch (1972).

PROGRAMS AND CURRICULUM

The research literature on programs and curriculum designed or adapted for use with gifted minority students is sparse. Practices in this area are based mainly on conceptualizations of curricula and program designs which are most appropriate for these children.

The programmatic needs of these children would be more adequately met through a total program plan instead of, for example, a limited pull-out program. The model for this program should not be a deficit model but one focused on the positive talents of the gifted children. Curriculum should include opportunities for developing positive self concepts. This would include an opportunity to learn about and share the history and artifacts of their culture with other students. Higher level thinking skills can be developed through the use of their strengths in creativity, music, or leadership skills. They could for instance explore the parallels between the various sociopolitical periods of this country and the types of music, poetry, and paintings done by minorities. As a part of this project, they could be asked to project future representations of these areas based on data they would have collected.

The use of bibliotherapy has been suggested by Frasier and McCannon (1981). This activity coupled with the use of mentors or role models from minority groups will help develop positive self concepts.

The Empire State Institute for the Performing Arts is an example of the type of program that can be used to discover and develop the abilities of minority children. This institute's teacher/performers contract with school districts of the state of New York where they involve the children in drama and various roles of the

theater from the actor to the technician. During these training sessions, students are encouraged to use or develop their reading skills and knowledge of history, literature and many other subjects. From this experience, high school students have been able to work as interns with the theater. They use the theater as their school base having signed a contract with the home school to complete the requirements necessary for completion of their degrees. The exciting stories of the exceptionally high ability exhibited by many underachieving students in this program make this type of network a viable resource for discovering and nurturing the talent of the minority gifted student.

There are increasing numbers of resources of materials becoming available for use in schools. Local libraries, museums, and state and local government documents are good sources. There is a need for a more complete portrait of the appropriate program to meet the needs of the minority gifted student. Examples of what has worked will need to be shared with program designers including short-range units of study.

It is the opinion of this author that programs for the gifted minority cannot be codified because the programmatic needs of individuals within this gifted minority population can be quite different. A general structure to follow would include the following: a variety of individual or small group projects based on the students' interests, community exploration and service, creative physical expression, one-to-one and group counseling, challenging courses including interdisciplinary ones, outside class experiences with research strategies of archeologists, museum curators, scientist, etc., and the involvement of parents or guardians in understanding the roles they can play in the development of these exceptional abilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

The recommendations to be made for meeting the needs of the gifted minority child must be closely tied to attitudes and the conceptualization of the problem. Based upon these factors, the following recommendations are made.

1. National research and training centers that would provide the type of concentrated effort and information for development and dissemination.

These research and training centers would bring together persons who would seek answers to many research questions such as:

- ❖ What percentage of the national dropout rate among minorities are gifted?
- ❖ What identification techniques are most effective to use in locating gifted minority students?
- ❖ Are there behaviors which are unique to minority students that should be included in the identification process?

- ❖ Are there differences in the innate capabilities of minority students when compared to other population groups?
- ❖ What teaching strategies or models are most effective in meeting the needs of the gifted minority student?

The training aspects of the research center should include the development of links between demonstrated behaviors and intellectual processing abilities. Teachers and planners should then be trained to use observation techniques to determine significant clues of potential giftedness.

Another aspect of this training should include techniques of using one discipline to develop a skill in another. For example, a child who is gifted in music might have little motivation to develop skills in mathematics. Introducing the child to the use of mathematics in music and art will create motivation to study mathematics. The subsequent lessons in mathematics could be designed using music or art as the beginning point. Each aspect of training should be designed so that it can become a part of preservice and inservice requirements for teachers, psychologists, and counselors.

2. Parents must be included in the plan for developing the skills of the young child. Special curriculum for the parent and child must be developed and special training activities planned for parents in order for them to give their youngsters a head start.
3. There is a need for professionals in the field of education of the gifted to reach out to businesses for assistance in using technology to develop teaching materials and processes for efficiently identifying the child from a minority group. There is a need for continuing research in the use of computers and interactive disks for the development of reading skills, creative problem-solving techniques, and creative product development strategies. Education divisions of these businesses are willing to work with educators in developing new strategies for discovering and enhancing intellectual abilities. These professionals can also be used as mentors and consultants who are given the responsibility of exposing student to many career trajectories.
4. National and international groups should develop a network which would provide examples of curriculum materials used with minority students who have strengths in certain areas, but also need to develop the areas where they have weaknesses.
5. There should be greater flexibility in school scheduling to allow children to benefit from more than a cursory involvement with the many cultural and educational resources outside of the school room. These resources can help in discovering certain talents and using those talents for the development

of the child's abilities. The benefits to the minority student of becoming a participant in the acquisition of knowledge within or outside of the regular school environment will be enormous.

6. Support for longitudinal studies and evaluations of programs which have been instituted is crucial for long-range decision making. This will require program planners and teachers to maintain data regarding the effects of the processes used to identify and plan for minority children.
7. Funding through the federal government or through matching grants from community organization, foundations, or corporation is crucial if effective and significant research regarding the discovery and nurturance of talent among minorities is to be done. The investment of time, effort, and funds in creative and meaningful answers to the processes for discovering "diamonds" among minority students is an investment in the future of our society.
8. There is a need for a repository or organized network for sharing information and ideas regarding activities that have worked. Telecommunications networks have been used, for instance, to assist participants in special interest areas to continue the development of new strategies to share with others who are connected to the system. Special Talk, a Logo group in special education has used this technique successfully (Cockran & Bull, 1986). This type of network would also develop a "buddy system" among planners and teachers.

CONCLUSIONS

An indepth review of the five aspects of the paradigm suggested that if we intended to address the concerns of the "undiscovered diamonds" then we need systematic and sincere planning to address these concerns. These five aspects point to the fact that (a) we are missing some major sources of talent in our society; (b) that we have uncertain ways to try to discover that talent; and (c) there is no clear picture of the nature of differentiated program strategies that should be used for these students. Futrell, (1986) has noted that, "the new student population, which consists increasingly of minorities, children of poverty, children from nontraditional homes and children with limited English proficiency will become exiled from the mainstream of American society. These students will form our nation's new disenfranchised class" (p. 5). It is safe to assume that some of the children among this group are gifted. Therefore, it is imperative that a major investment both human and monetary, be made to support efforts to discover and develop the abilities of these students.

The outcome of such a massive undertaking would provide models which would generate ideas for strategies to be used with all minority students and will establish clearer guidelines for discovering and developing the tremendous amount of talent which would otherwise be lost to the nation.

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CHAPTER 9

Disadvantaged and Culturally Diverse Gifted Students

Mary M. Frasier

The low number of gifted students identified in disadvantaged and culturally diverse groups has been, and continues to be, problematic. Why has this problem persisted? Why do we know, think we know, and need to know about resolving identification issues? This paper provides responses to these questions and proposes a possible solution. A profile system is presented that describes a viable way to utilize data from test and non-test sources to identify these children.

The issue of identifying gifted disadvantaged and culturally diverse students has long been problematic. The low number of these children being identified for gifted programs attests to the fact that identification problems have not been solved. Talent loss among them continues virtually unabated. The homogeneity of the population in gifted programs, in and of itself, is not necessarily the problem if the identified students can truly be said to represent all those who are gifted.

Why then are there so few disadvantaged and culturally diverse students enrolled in gifted programs? The purposes of this discussion are (a) to briefly review what we know, what we think we know, and what we need to know about the identification of gifted disadvantaged and culturally diverse students; and (b) to present a system designed to facilitate the use of multiple criteria in identifying giftedness.

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Reprinted from Frasier, M. M. (1991). Disadvantaged and culturally diverse gifted students. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 234–245. Reprinted with permission of Prufrock Press Inc.

WHAT WE KNOW

A major challenge is to discover bright disadvantaged and culturally diverse children so that they, too, can take advantage of programs and services designed to assist children in realizing their potential for achievement. What we know about finding those children will be discussed in this section.

While we do know that gifted children may be found in all cultural groups and at every socioeconomic level, we also know that, thus far, attempts to find them have not been successful. We know that current identification procedures present major difficulties when attempting to identify gifted disadvantaged and culturally diverse children. Reliance on teacher nominations and the use of I.Q. cut-off scores has effectively precluded the identification of the gifts and talents of these students (Frasier, 1990). Abbott (1982) has aptly observed that “examining I.Q. scores for the purpose of identifying giftedness . . . amounts to viewing intelligence in terms of English fluency” (p. 8).

We know that accurate assessment of ability requires that data from multiple sources be collected and evaluated. According to current research on intelligence and the assessment of intellectual capacity, an intelligence test provides a very narrow view of abilities (Gardner, 1983; Sternberg, 1986; Treffinger & Renzulli, 1986). Its sole use reduces the multifaceted, complex phenomenon called giftedness to a single factor.

We know that some disadvantaged and culturally diverse children are identified when traditional identification procedures are used. Most do not fare well in the process. As Bernal (1982) has noted:

Many gifted minority and white students, if lacking in psychometric sophistication or command of standard English, will score below their actual achievement or aptitude levels. Such students cannot be identified by traditional means, especially early in their school careers (p. 52).

We know that there must be a reevaluation of current practices if there are to be improvements in the identification of students currently underrepresented in gifted programs.

Passow (1982) succinctly described three factors affecting the identification of gifted disadvantaged children: (a) experiential deprivations, especially in early childhood; (b) limited language development; and (c) socioeconomic or racial isolation. We know that implicit or explicit knowledge of these factors fosters the attitude that gifted children cannot be found in groups defined as disadvantaged. Such attitudes affect these children’s access to gifted programs; the search may be limited by the notion that none will be found.

We know that numerous solutions have been suggested to address the underrepresentation of disadvantaged and culturally diverse students in gifted programs. These solutions have included: (a) soliciting nominations from persons other than the teacher (Blackshear, 1979; Davis, 1978); (b) using checklists and rating scales specifically designed for culturally diverse and disadvantaged populations (Bernal, 1974; Gay, 1978; Hilliard, 1976; Torrance, 1977); (c) modifying or altering traditional identification procedures (Fitz-Gibbon, 1975); (d) developing culture specific identification systems (Mercer & Lewis, 1978); (e) using quota systems (LaRose, 1978); (f) developing programs designed to eliminate experiential and language deficits prior to evaluation for gifted programs (Johnson, Starnes, Gregory & Blaylock, 1985); (g) using a matrix to weight data from multiple sources (Baldwin & Wooster, 1977; Baldwin, 1984); and (h) modifying assessment procedures by providing students with instruction before administering test tasks (Feuerstein, 1979).

We know that none of these solutions has solved the problem. Few culturally diverse and disadvantaged students are being identified for participation in gifted programs.

WHAT WE THINK WE KNOW

A frequent conclusion is that disadvantaged children come from environments that do not support academic endeavors. The perceived value and motivational discrepancies between the home and the school are felt to be the major factors affecting their achievement (Passow, 1982). The problem is that all children from low-income homes are felt to be deprived of the experiences needed to adequately prepare them to succeed in school. What is frequently not recognized is the wide variation in the kinds and amounts of environmental stimulation provided by families in different socioeconomic, ethnic, and racial groups.

Findings from research suggest that it would be more profitable to focus on characteristics of the home environment; the traditional focus on educational level and occupation of parents has not provided a complete picture. Hess and Holloway (1982) concluded that investigations into verbal interaction between parents and children, expectations of parents for achievement, affective relationships between parents and children, discipline and control strategies, and parental beliefs are better variables to study.

There should be a recognition of the differences within disadvantaged and culturally diverse populations. Indiscriminately applying stereotypical descriptors to each minority or low-income child must be avoided (Kitano & Kirby, 1986). There are many well-adjusted, well-cared for children, even in inner city environments, who are encouraged and supported in their intellectual pursuits (Frasier, 1980). Adverse conditions of life may hamper academic achievement, but there is

no conclusive evidence that such conditions preclude academic success (Gordon & Wilkerson, 1966).

We think we know that characteristics of gifted disadvantaged and culturally diverse children are more similar to those of nongifted members of their group than to those that typically describe gifted children. In actuality, when traits used to describe gifted advantaged children are compared with traits describing gifted disadvantaged children, there is little difference except in semantics (Frasier, 1983). Traits common to gifted children, regardless of group membership, include the ability to: (a) meaningfully manipulate some symbol system held valuable in the subculture; (b) think logically, given appropriate data; (c) use stored knowledge to solve problems; (d) reason by analogy; and (e) extend or extrapolate knowledge to new situations of unique applications (Gallagher & Kinney, 1974). We need to know more about how these abilities are manifested differently in various cultural groups.

WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW

If we are to succeed in identifying gifted children from all cultures we must resist the tendency to compare them to dominant culture standards. Rogoff and Morelli (1989) have suggested the use of a sociocultural context of development:

Not only is the diversity of cultural backgrounds in our nation a resource for the creativity and future of the nation, it is also a resource for scholars to study how children develop. To make good use of this information, cultural research with minorities needs to focus on examining the process and functioning of the cultural context of development. . . . The potential from research on cultural groups around the world as well as down the street lies in its challenge to our system of assumptions and in the creative efforts of scholars to synthesize knowledge from observations of different contexts of human development. Such challenge and synthesis is fruitful in the efforts to achieve a deeper and broader understanding of human nature and nurture (pp. 346–347).

To achieve this deeper and broader understanding, it would be helpful to focus attention on those children we are missing when traditional identification procedures are used. The goal should not be to find ways to fit these children into the existing paradigm. The goal should be to develop an identification paradigm that accommodates both the children we are missing and the children we are finding.

An important place to start is to study those students from disadvantaged and culturally diverse backgrounds who were nominated but never made it into the

gifted program. Was their nomination a fluke? What attributes of giftedness did they exhibit that caused them to be nominated? What definition of giftedness was in the mind of the nominator? What can we observe about these children, beyond test scores, that would provide us with information that should be considered in determining their potential for gifted performance?

A very useful list of characteristics developed by Hagen (1980) places the emphasis on gifted behaviors; her list deemphasizes a test score as the “*sine qua non*” of giftedness. Behavioral characteristics include observing such behaviors as a student’s use of language, the quality of questions, problem solving strategies, and the students’ breadth and depth of information. This list provides a useful way for classroom teachers and parents to understand gifted behaviors they can observe in the classroom and in the home.

Present identification procedures provide no effective way to collect and use this information. There is a need to find a way to use data, in addition to test scores, to assess giftedness.

DeHaan and Havighurst (1961) cautioned against relying on test data alone to identify and select students with gifts and talents. They asserted that the very complex, multidimensional nature of mental abilities suggests that above-average ability can be described more adequately as a group of independent factors than as a general ability expressed by an I.Q. Specifically, they noted that “A profile, rather than an I.Q., would seem to be more suitable as an expression of these patterns of abilities” (DeHaan & Havighurst, 1961, p. 41). They further asserted that:

The conclusions that can be drawn from scientific studies of tests is that although objective tests are good, and the I.Q. a valuable concept, they need to be used with a good deal of caution. There is not mechanical formula that can be applied. Every decision concerning a gifted child has to be made in light of *all* available data (DeHaan & Havighurst, 1961, p. 44).

Current discussions concerned with the measurement of intelligent behavior emphasize more and more the use of multiple criteria. Cronbach (1984, p. 339) noted that “Whatever test is used, information of other kinds, . . . should be taken into account.” Summarizing viewpoints from several authors concerned with the identification of gifted cultural and ethnic minority students, Maker and Schiever (1989) noted two consistent recommendations: (a) use multiple assessment procedures, including objective data from a variety of sources (p. 295); and (b) use a case study approach, in which a variety of assessment data is interpreted in the context of a student’s individual characteristics, and decisions are made by a team of qualified individuals (p. 296).

THE FRASIER TALENT ASSESSMENT PROFILE (F-TAP)

The Frasier Talent Assessment Profile system (See Figure 1) was designed to facilitate the use of test and non-test criteria to identify students with extraordinary gifts and talents. It is based on four assumptions:

1. Methods to locate gifted children from diverse cultural backgrounds can be developed without eroding quality and without requiring excessive data collection or excessive expenditures of time.
2. Identification methods should rely on assessing dynamic rather than static displays of gifted behaviors.
3. A profile, rather than cut-off scores or weighting systems, provides the most effective and efficient way to display data for interpretation from test and non-test sources.
4. Results from identification procedures should be used to design programs and develop curricula for gifted students.

STRUCTURE OF THE FRASIER TALENT ASSESSMENT PROFILE

The F-TAP provides a way to collect, display, and interpret data from test and non-test sources. Data are never reduced to a single score; rather, the use of multiple scales provide a way to interpret data from diverse sources.

The five scales on the horizontal axis reflect the most commonly used ways to describe test and non-test results: (a) percentile, (b) deviation I.Q., (c) stanine, (d) standard deviation, and (e) Likert scale. Points on these scales are aligned so that data from different sources can be viewed in relationship to each other.

The vertical axis contains the categories in which data are collected. The five categories were selected to reflect the talent areas specified in the 1978 Federal definition of gifted children: (a) academic, (b) creativity, etc. Both aptitude and achievement data are collected in the first four categories; self-report and observational data are collected in the fifth category.

DATA COLLECTION AND EVALUATION

Data are collected in those categories relevant in determining the strength and quality of gifted behaviors for the talent area under consideration. A blank category is provided so that decision-makers can exercise some flexibility in including data not covered by the categories listed.

Interpretations of data collected on the profile are recorded on a summary sheet. In addition, factors that may impact the development of programs, curricula, and counseling activities are recorded. These factors include descriptions of students' personal characteristics, special language considerations and mediating

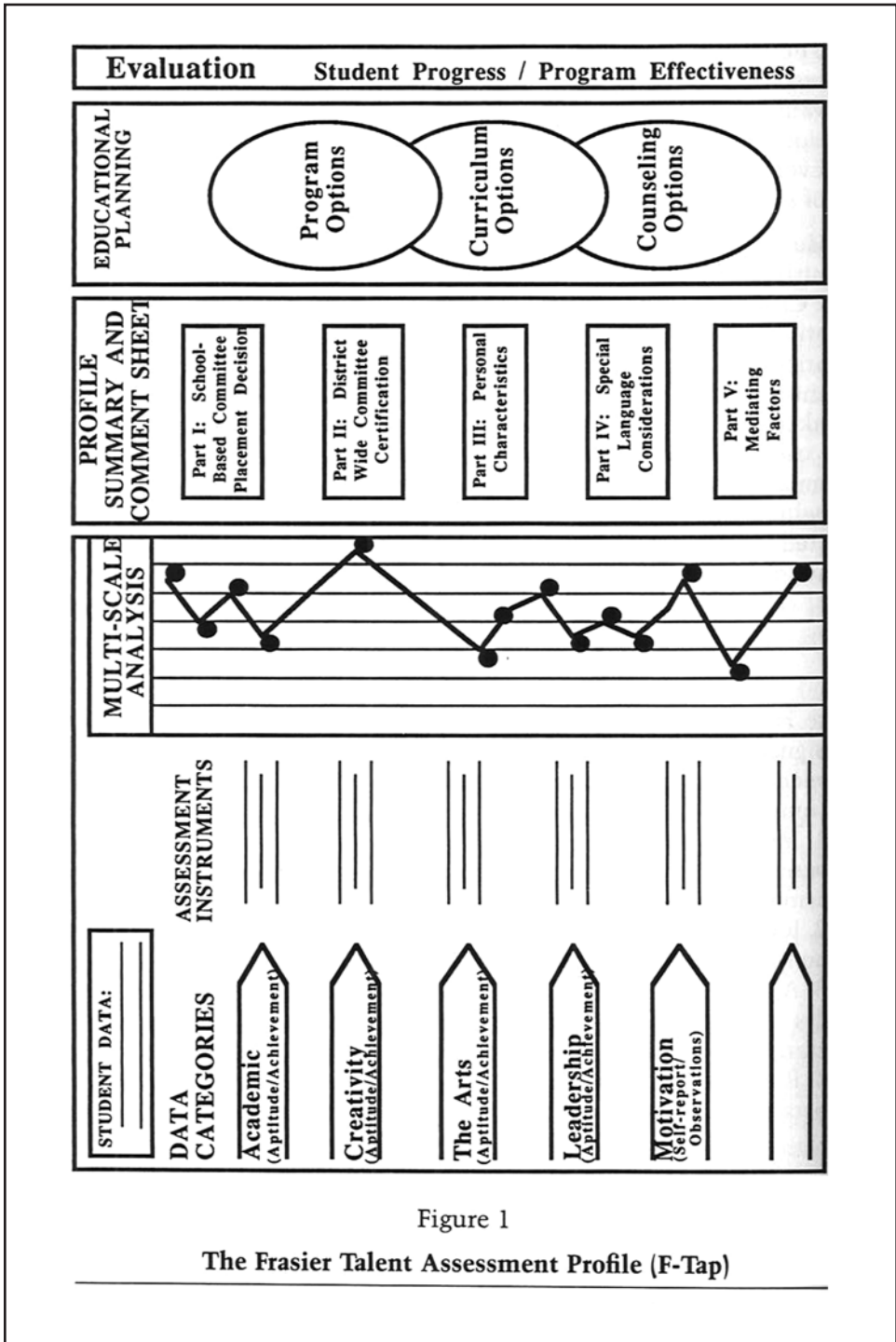


Figure 1

The Frasier Talent Assessment Profile (F-Tap)

factors that influence curriculum decisions, e.g., physical, visual, auditory, and emotional circumstances, and environmental decisions.

IMPLEMENTING THE F-TAP

Collecting data on the F-TAP proceeds in three stages: (a) screening, (b) assessment, and (c) placement. During screening, nominations are sought from sources inside and outside the school. The goal is to involve anyone who has knowledge about a child's behavior. The surest way to achieve equity is to provide numerous ways for talented children to be included, regardless of background or group membership. Qualifying levels are set as liberally as possible; all recommendations are considered. Every possible way is sought to involve every segment of the community in the nomination process.

During the assessment stage, data are collected and plotted on the profile. During the placement stage, data are interpreted. Decision-makers review each student's profile according to guidelines and make recommendations for placement or non-placement. This stage conforms to the best practice that no decisions are made until all data can be reviewed and evaluated.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Staff development is critical to the implementations of the F-TAP. A staff development program must include all groups that should be informed regarding giftedness and the process used to certify students for placement. These groups might consist of: (a) regular classroom teachers and teachers for the gifted; (b) other school personnel, including principals, media specialists, and Central Office administrators, e.g., subject area coordinators, curriculum coordinators; and (c) students, parents, and peers. In other words, any person with knowledge about a student should be provided with information about the gifted program and invited to submit nominations.

Staff development programs should include information on behavioral characteristics of gifted students; the definition of giftedness, especially the state's definition; and a thorough understanding of the identification process. Information on the process should include a description of the type student sought, when nominations can be made, the process by which decisions are made for placement, and the appeals process. The most important emphasis should be on explaining behavioral characteristics that indicate gifted potential. Careful attention should be paid to helping nominators understand how these behaviors may be exhibited in different groups.

SUMMARY

The F-TAP transcends the practice of using cut-off scores by providing a way of collecting, displaying, and interpreting data from test and non-test sources. It provides an effective way for decision-makers to evaluate student strengths and needs when making program, curriculum, and counseling decisions. In addition, it provides an effective framework for evaluating student growth in the gifted program. Further information on the use of the F-TAP is available from the author.

The mandate before us is to identify and nurture gifted potential wherever it is found. The challenge before us is to find an equitable way to allow *all* gifted children the opportunity to participate in experiences designed to maximize the development of their potential. This challenge can best be met by placing our emphasis on the analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the diverse ways in which gifted potential is exhibited.

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Black students who are gifted or advanced learners are too often overlooked and misunderstood in education. Part of the problem associated with this neglect is that relatively little scholarship exists on those who are culturally different and in need of more challenge in school settings. This body of work was developed to help resolve this shortcoming and to inform and guide educators in their work with gifted and advanced Black students. In the first work of its kind, the book's editors have compiled reprints of what they believe to be among the best or most promising work, past and present, in understanding, meeting the needs of, and working with Black gifted and/or advanced learners. Theory, research, models, and strategies shed light on what we all must do to ensure that both gifted and advanced Black learners excel in school and otherwise reach their full potential.

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\$45.00 US



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Cover design by Raquel Trevino

Printed in the USA

