

Enrichment in the Primary Classroom

The primary classroom teacher plays a critical role in meeting the enrichment needs of students *in the classroom*. These students need special consideration to maximize their abilities and keep them engaged and loving to learn throughout their school years.

As the teacher, you are often the first person responsible for early identification of enrichment needs. Perhaps you have noticed a student that is advanced in reading, writing, or math compared to their peers. The student could be constantly curious, intense, sensitive, analytical, and / or have other defining characteristics.

Young gifted children can, however, exhibit uneven development and even characteristics that seem negative like sloppy work habits, nonconformity and a dislike of repetition. Meeting the needs of these students may seem overwhelming at first, but teachers can maximize their effectiveness by:

- Being on the look-out for students who need more.
 - [Primary Checklist, Challenge Magazine](#)
 - [Enrichment Checklist K - 3](#)
- Being sensitive to social and emotional needs
- Being their advocate! ***This is huge!***
- Differentiating curriculum and instruction.

Let us show you some ideas below!



- [Special Education Handbook, Enrichment Programming](#)
Where you can find last year's Newsletters and Resources!



- **Enrichment Questions?**
Send us your questions, thoughts & ideas about enrichment
[Feedback Form](#)

“You can discover more about a person in **an hour of play** than in a year of conversation” – [Plato](#)

- [Creative Starting Blocks](#)
(from Think and Discover - Creative Enrichment Ideas)



STRATEGIES

The Four Basics of Differentiation

When thinking about how to differentiate for enrichment students, consider altering the **PACE**, **DELIVERY / CONTENT**, **PRODUCT**, **PROCESS**

For examples, check out our [Enrichment Cheat Sheet](#).

Try Curriculum Compacting

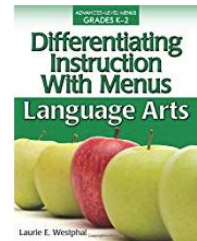
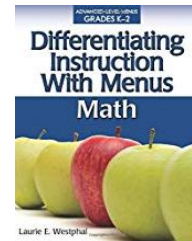
Some students can demonstrate mastery of content prior to the bulk of your class.

Consider **pretesting** a unit or “**most difficult first**” to determine the student(s) that will engage in extension activities. For example, if the rest of the students are learning letters and sounds on the carpet, and the student has already shown mastery in this area, they can be working on an area of interest.



Menus

[Laurie Westphal](#) has written a series of books that provide different menu ideas based on higher order thinking skills. Here is an example of [primary product ideas](#)! Taken from, [Differentiating Instruction With Menus, Language Arts](#) by Laurie Westphal.



Bloom's

Bloom's Taxonomy is a hierarchical ordering of cognitive skills. It is a powerful tool for teachers to use to increase complexity of questions and assignments. Enrichment students should be working in the higher levels of Blooms.

- [All things Bloom's](#)
- Step it Up with [Bloom's Revised Taxonomy](#)

IDEAS AND RESOURCES:

LANGUAGE



- Provide more challenging reading materials (ones at their reading level) and encourage higher level thinking activities based on Bloom's Taxonomy
- Independent Learning Opportunities (for example research cards, become the expert)
- Reflection journals
- Free writing
- Open-ended writing or reading opportunities
- Provide opportunities for students to use creative arts to demonstrate their language abilities (allow them to become poets, painters, performers or authors)
- Allow for discovery
- [Encourage Divergent Thinking](#)
- [Epic Reading](#)
- [Creative Activities for Gifted Readers](#)
- Mensa for kids - Excellence in Reading:
Reading list for [K - 3](#)
Reading List for [4 - 6](#)

MATH

- Shorten regular curriculum by eliminating review work for mastered concepts and reducing practice exercises
- Provide real-life open ended problem solving tasks
- [Kangaroo Math](#) contest - practise questions in French and English
- Problems for Highly Able Primary Students
- Logic Puzzles, Math Puzzles
- [Math Menus](#)
- [14 Tools for the Math Classroom](#)
- [The Ultimate STEM Guide for Kids: 239 Cool Sites About Science, Technology, Engineering and Math](#)
- [NRICH Maths Project](#) from Cambridge University, which has a rich selection of Primary challenges
- [Open Middle](#) - Bank of Challenging Math problems worth solving (K-12)
- Building or playing with manipulatives - tangrams, pentominoes

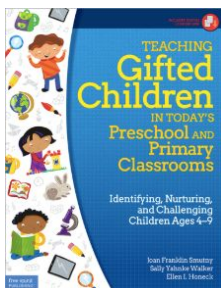


A HODGE-PODGE OF OTHER IDEAS FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS

- using graph paper, rearrange the classroom to make it work better
- design the perfect playground
- interview someone that you think is wonderful. Prepare the questions ahead of the interview
- create a play and show other students how to present it to the class with you
- write a letter that starts with the statement: "I don't think it's fair that _____." Use your letter to suggest ways to improve the problem. Send it to someone who can help to make things better.
- create graphs or other charts to show your classmates' preferences for meals, desserts, movies, music, books, vacations or other topics
- create mazes for other kids to try
- create a code and ask other kids to figure it out
- use Scratch to try coding
- translate this week's vocabulary words into another language and try to make a sentence
- make up an acronym to use as a memory strategy
- create a star constellation by making pinholes in a dark paper, then make up a myth that tells about that constellation
- interview the oldest person you know, then use a Venn Diagram to compare that person's childhood to yours
- explore [SciShow Videos](#) for broad topics of discovery
- draw or cut out pictures from a magazine to describe:
 - ▲ Things you can do alone
 - ▲ Things you need help with
 - ▲ The perfect birthday party
 - ▲ Things that make you feel proud
 - ▲ Things you are curious about

From 'The Cluster Grouping Handbook: A Schoolwide Model' by Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles, 2008

DON'T FORGET THE PRIMARY DIVERGENT THINKING CALENDARS!



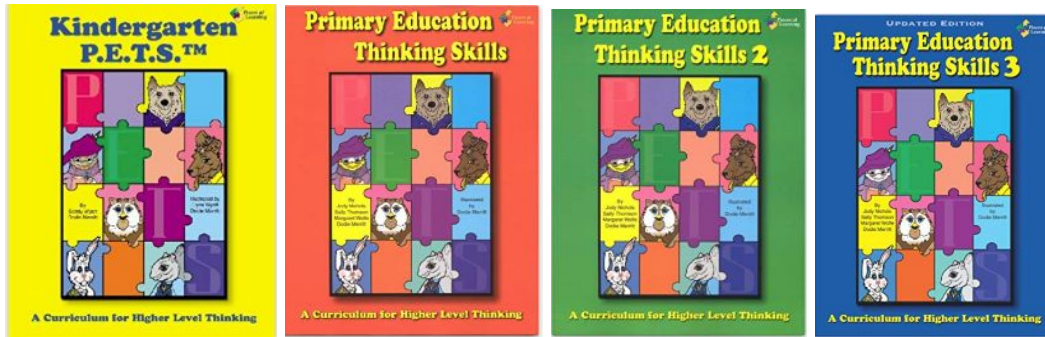
[Teaching Gifted Children in Today's Preschool and Primary Classrooms](#): Proven, practical early childhood teaching strategies and techniques help teachers identify young gifted children, differentiate and extend the curriculum, assess and document students' development, and build partnerships with parents. Individual chapters focus on early identification, curriculum compacting, social studies, language arts, math and science, cluster grouping, social-emotional development, and finding and supporting giftedness in diverse populations.

ALL THE RAGE!

Resources & Activities for Gifted Enrichment

OCTOBER 2019

[PETS™ \(Primary Education Thinking Skills\)](#) is a systematized enrichment and diagnostic thinking skills program. Lessons are presented in convergent analysis, divergent synthesis, visual/spatial thinking, and evaluation, suitable for grades K-3. The program aligns to the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.



KINDIE KORNER (with ideas for all primary students)

We sat down with **Loa Zilles**, Consultant in the Teaching and Learning Division of Learning and Support Services with a Kindergarten Focus, to ask for her ideas on how to address enrichment needs in the kindergarten classroom. Here are some of the key take-aways.

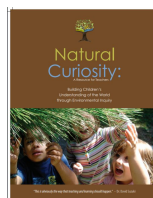
Play-based learning:

- is intended to be a highly differentiated model
- supports a diverse population of learners, including those requiring enrichment
- focuses not on curriculum achievement, but on individual gains
- builds self regulation and social skills enabling students to succeed socially and academically in their learning environments
- provides a rich vein of learning through the inquiry cycle
- allows students to explore areas of connected interest with depth and complexity through broad, rich topics of inquiry
- builds a culture of curiosity and nurtures students' ability to notice and wonder
- feeds the inquiry model and allows complex investigations
- provides rich opportunities and experiences to give them something to wonder about
- Is a balance between teacher directed and child initiated

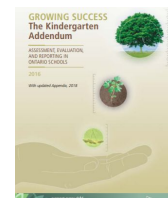
[The Kindergarten Program](#)



[Natural Curiosity - A Resource for Teachers](#)



[Growing Success - The Kindergarten Addendum](#)



"Deep meaning often lies in childish play"

- Friedrich von Schiller

In kindergarten, it is important to focus on all **four frames**. We should not focus on a student's intellectual strengths at the expense of some of their social and emotional needs, as these skills are the foundation of their mental well-being in future grades.



Demonstrating Literacy & Mathematical Behaviours / Problem Solving & Innovating

These two frames tend to be strengths of students identified as needing enrichment support. And fortunately, there are many ways to enrich these skills in the framework of play-based learning. Some tips include:

- **Having broad topics of inquiry in the classroom that allow for many different interests to be accommodated for.**
 - For example, instead of “Ladybugs” try “Things that Fly,” instead of structures (which lacks an emotional appeal), try “Homes,” which includes homes for animals, humans, insects, and allows for a comparison between the features. [SciShow Kids ideas here](#)
- **Authentic problem-solving in the classroom.** While this can be tricky and time consuming, it is a very valuable skill. It requires multiple perspectives and possibly, a degree of experimentation and trial and error. Add an investigative nature to learning that appeals to all kids.
 - For example, if there is conflict over toys, instead of removing the toy and the problem, try brainstorming ideas and trying them out to see if it resolves the issue.

TRY: Think like an Engineer

Need help getting started? [Watch this video](#) and learn how engineers identify and solve problems. Then, help Jessi with a big problem of her own using the method: **ask, imagine, create, improve**. Next, encourage this process in the classroom all year to get students to become problem solvers in their classrooms and communities.



Belonging & Contributing / Self-Regulation & Well-Being

Some students with enrichment needs may have advanced math and language skills, but struggle with belonging and contributing. One way to help them with this skill, while using high order thinking skills, would include exercises in empathy and perspective taking. In terms of **self-regulation**, understanding how our actions affect, and are perceived by others can improve behaviours and therefore relationships with peers.

Showing empathy is an important part of being a friend and getting along with people. It means you can think about and understand how other people are feeling. Children are less likely to hurt and more likely to help someone if they can imagine themselves in that person's place and can share that person's thoughts and feelings.

TRY: These activities will help your students understand how to describe their own feelings and how to be supportive of each other.

- What is empathy (primary)? [Video: Sesame Street with Mark Ruffalo](#)
- What is empathy (Jr./Int.):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzPMMSKfKZQ>
- Why is empathy important (teachers)? [Brene Brown video](#)



Empathy Activities:

- <https://classroom.kidshealth.org/classroom/prekto2/personal/growing/empathy.pdf>
- <http://preventingbullying.promoteprevent.org/8-empathy-activities>

CONTESTS/COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

- ★ [Go Eng Girls](#) For Grade 7 to 10 girls, Saturday October 5, 2019 University of Waterloo
- ★ [Caribou Math](#) For Grades 1 to 12, the first contest is free, October 16 and 17, 2019
- ★ [Kangaroo Math](#) For Grades 1 to 12, March 22, 2020
- ★ [Beaver Computing Challenge](#) Registration is due by Oct 23, 2019
- ★ [Ontario's Fish Art Contest](#) For Grades 4 to 12, by December 6, 2019 (art and essay)
- ★ [Global Math Challenge](#) For students age 6 + (Beginner to Master level) Oct. 26-28, 2019
- ★ [Polar Expressions Poetry Contest](#) - November 29, 2019
- ★ [Polar Expressions Short Story Contest](#) - December 6, 2019
- ★ [Remembrance Day Literacy and Poster Contest](#) - November 13, 2019
- ★ [Remembrance Day Video Contest](#) - December 1, 2019

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MEET THE ENRICHMENT TEAM



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