BLOOM'S TAXONOMY (adapted)

The Enrichment Triad Model

Developed by Renzulli, this is perhaps the most widely used curriculum model in gifted education. Its development began in 1977, and since that time the model has been incorporated within the Schoolwide Enrichment Model (Renzulli and Reis, 1985), an approach to gifted education that enhances the regular classroom programmes with a number of the previously discussed provisions. The model (initially intended for primary schools) has also been adapted for secondary schools in the Secondary Triad Model (Reis and Renzulli, 1986). Since the Enrichment Triad Model serves as the base for each of these adaptations, it is more closely examined here.

The model consists of three interrelated types of enrichment:
- Type I – general exploratory activities (enrichment);
- Type II – group training activities (process);
- Type III – individual and small-group investigations of real problems (product).

Type I enrichment offers students a wide range of experiences and activities in order to introduce a variety of topics. Type I may be facilitated through any number of outlets, including printed materials, media, field trips, and guest speakers. It moves students beyond the regular curriculum to potentially exciting areas of interest.

Type II enrichment is designed to give students the skills necessary to carry out investigations and develop a range of thinking and feeling processes. Renzulli and Reis (1986) suggest these include: creative-thinking, problem-solving, critical-thinking, decision-making, and affective processes. Research skills, communication skills, and how-to-learn skills are also developed.
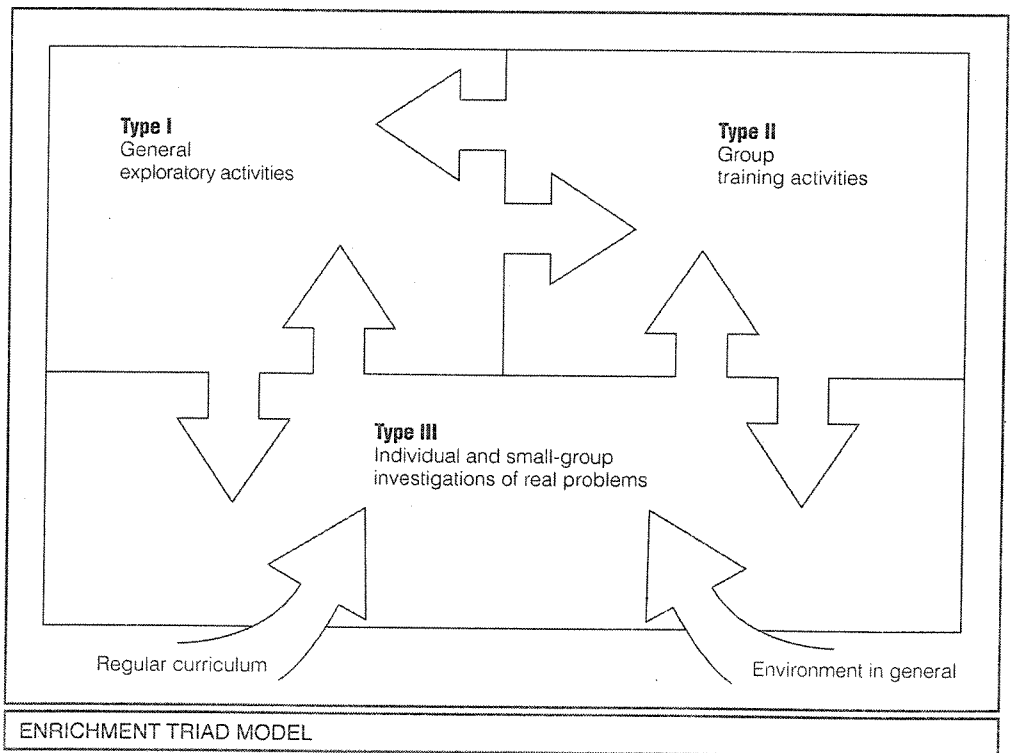
Type II enrichment enables students to "deal more effectively with advanced, differentiated content" (Riley, 1996, page 188). In adaptations of this curriculum model, types I and II enrichment are offered to all students.

Type III enrichment, however, is perhaps most suitable for gifted and talented students. Within this aspect of the model, students investigate real problems as individuals or small groups. They become producers of knowledge rather than consumers, actively formulating a problem, designing research, and presenting a product. Renzulli emphasises that students should emulate professional investigators and select appropriate audiences for final products.

These three types of enrichment are not sequential in nature but tend to flow freely from one to the other. As illustrated in the model below, students might move from a type I activity to type III and from there back into type II.
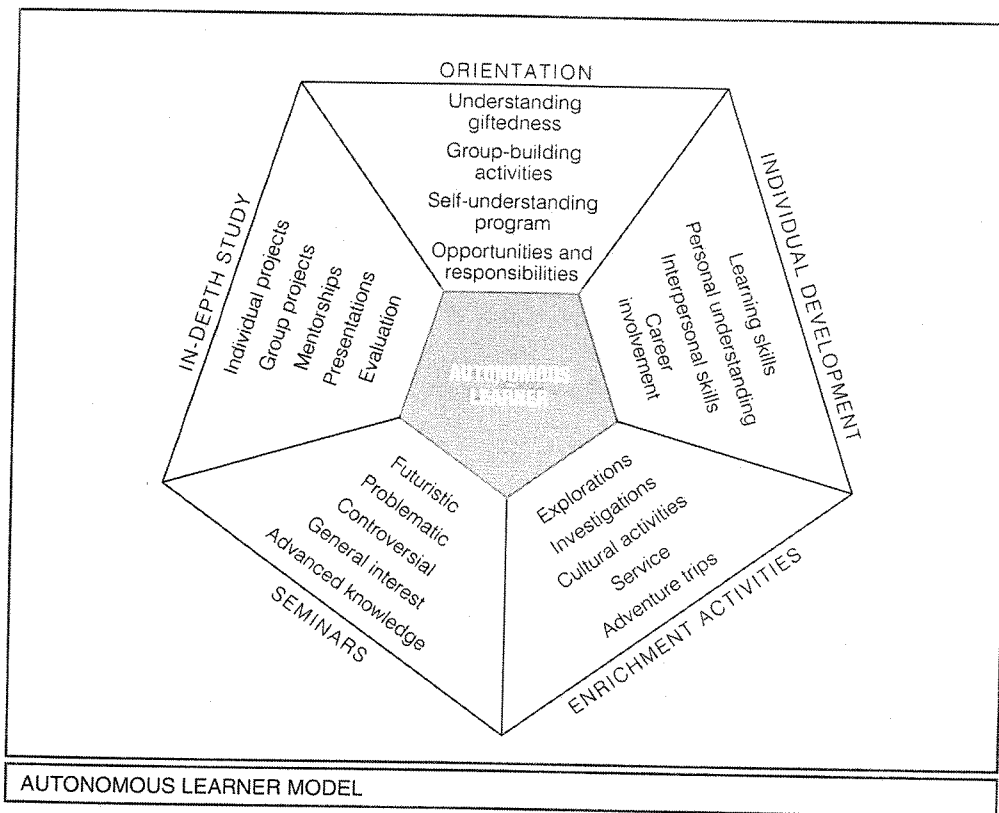

Example

Imagine a classroom of students listening to a storyteller (type I). During the storytelling, a group of students shows obvious enthusiasm and interest and so spends an additional hour learning storytelling techniques (type II). Consequently, one student decides that she'd like to create her own story to share at the city's storytelling festival (type III). In writing the story, she discovers she needs more information about her chosen topic (type I), and then considers the design of a costume (type II).

Type I
General
exploratory activities

Type II
Group
training activities

Type III
Individual and small-group
investigations of real problems

Regular curriculum

Environment in general

ENRICHMENT TRIAD MODEL

Although the Enrichment Triad Model offers a firm base for gifted programmes with an array of supporting practice and research, a valid criticism is that the model's focus is predominately enrichment. However, when used within a school-wide plan or in conjunction with other provisions, acceleration opportunities can also be offered. The model is flexible, practical, and appealing to teachers and students alike.

Autonomous Learner Model

Developed by Betts in 1985, this model focuses primarily on meeting the cognitive, emotional, and social needs of year 1–13 gifted and talented students through the development of autonomy and lifelong learning. The aim of the model is to give students the content, process, and product know-how that enables them to take responsibility for developing, implementing, and evaluating their own learning. As illustrated below, the model has five interactive dimensions.

ORIENTATION
Understanding giftedness
Group-building activities
Self-understanding program
Opportunities and responsibilities

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT
Learning skills
Personal understanding
Interpersonal skills
Career involvement

IN-DEPTH STUDY
Individual projects
Group projects
Mentorships
Presentations
Evaluation

SEMINARS
Futuristic
Problematic
Controversial
General interest
Advanced knowledge

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES
Explorations
Investigations
Cultural activities
Service
Adventure trips

AUTONOMOUS LEARNER

AUTONOMOUS LEARNER MODEL

Orientation gives students and teachers an opportunity to develop a foundation for the programme. In this dimension, students are introduced to the structure of the programme, including the activities and their own responsibilities. A unique aspect of this model is that it also encourages an investigation of concepts of giftedness, including group-building and self-understanding exercises.

Individual development serves as a launching pad for giving students the cognitive, emotional, and social skills, and concepts and attitudes they need for lifelong autonomous learning. This dimension is very much process oriented and thus is similar to Renzulli's type II activities.

Enrichment activities are designed to allow students to explore a variety of concepts and ideas. The intent of this dimension is to spark student interest, encourage the discovery of their strengths, and begin to unearth their passions. Content differentiation is the key element here, mirroring Renzulli's type I enrichment.

Seminars serve as an avenue for groups of students to each research a topic and present a seminar to other students. The seminars are designed to include three components: the presentation of factual information, group discussion and/or activity, and bringing closure to the issue. Students plan, present, and evaluate the seminars, shifting the responsibility for learning from the teacher to themselves.

In-depth study is the most demanding and challenging dimension of the model, with small groups or individual students being given the freedom to pursue their own areas of interest. Students determine what they will learn, how they will learn it, what resources are needed, how they will evidence their learning through a self-selected product, and finally, how they will evaluate the entire learning process. A contract is used to support this dimension. In-depth study integrates the other dimensions of the model, much as type III enrichment does in the Triad Model.

With both the Enrichment Triad and the Autonomous Learner models, a qualitatively differentiated programme is offered to gifted and talented students, with obvious changes being made to programme content, processes, and products.

Both models have many supporting materials available to schools by way of resources, professional development materials, and networking opportunities with schools throughout the world. Finally, they are "proven" models for the development of successful programmes for gifted and talented students – they have a strong research base behind them.
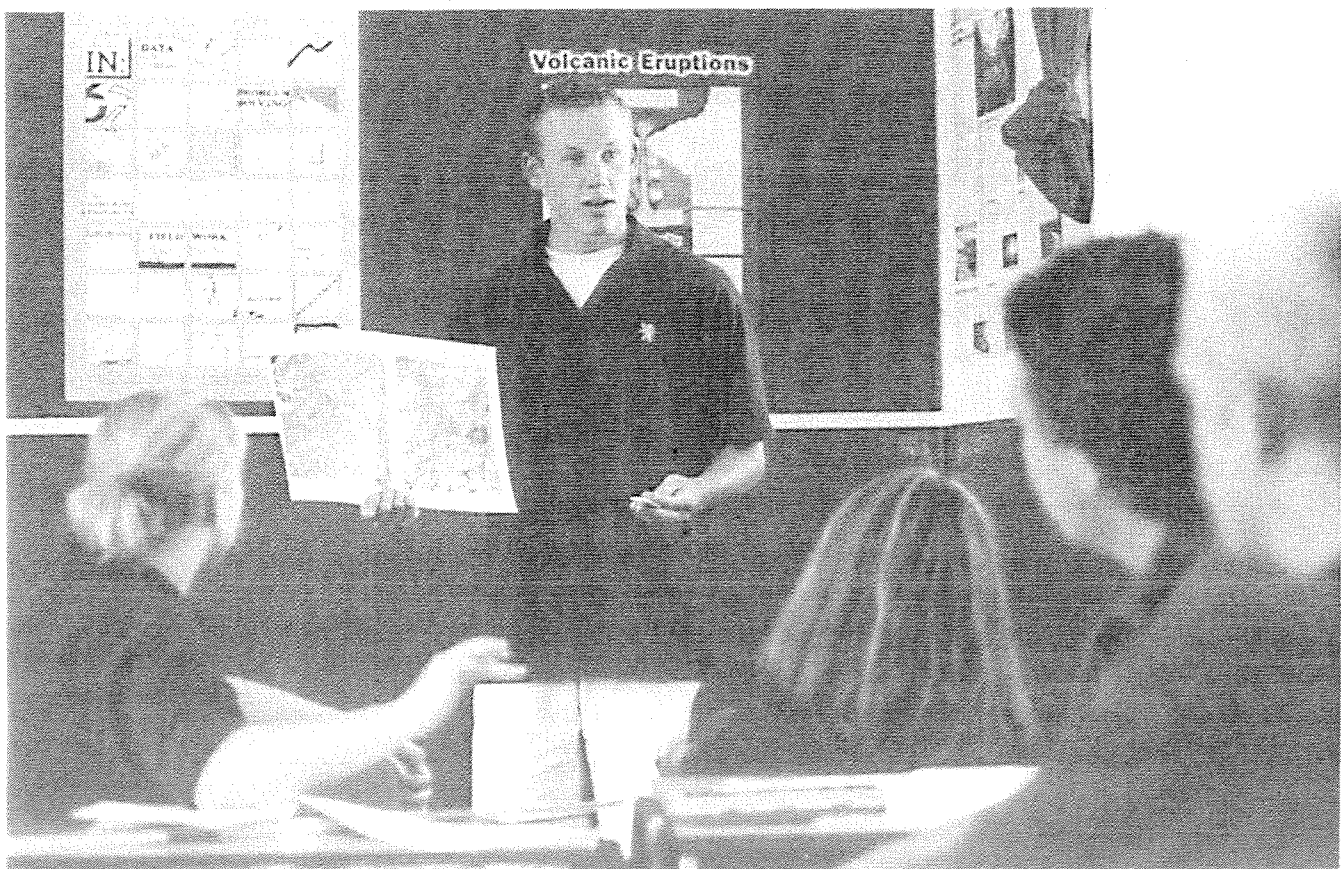
Summary: Differentiation for the Gifted and Talented

- The purpose of defining and identifying giftedness is to uncover individual abilities, qualities, and interests, and the purpose of differentiation is to further develop them.

- Within qualitative differentiation for gifted and talented students, three primary areas of differentiation emerge: content, process, and product. Differentiation transforms the learning environment and teaching style.

- When designing and implementing programmes for gifted and talented students, schools must take into consideration factors such as culture, gender, learning difficulties, and socio-economic status.

- When planning and implementing differentiated programmes for gifted and talented students, schools should utilise enrichment and acceleration, offering a continuum of provisions.

- Offering a continuum of opportunities for gifted and talented students involves individualising the options to meet the students' needs.

- In designing appropriate curricula for gifted and talented students, a curriculum model or models may serve as an ideal framework. Bloom's Taxonomy, the Autonomous Learner Model, and the Enrichment Triad Model are commonly adopted or adapted by schools.

The assessment of higher order thinking, creativity, and the social-affective domains are notoriously complex and difficult for even experts in the field. Sound evaluation of programmes is essential in terms of accountability.

Of the methods described below, some will be more relevant than others depending on the type of programme. Systematic and comprehensive programme evaluations are likely to use *curriculum models* such as the models described earlier.

Evaluation Models

The use of a co-operative team approach is helpful because it allows an evaluation to be worked out together and evaluation tasks to be shared.

It is important to build evaluation into an educational programme from the beginning. If this is done, appropriate measures and procedures can be chosen from the outset to suit objectives and learning outcomes.

Formative assessment can also be undertaken if its goals are specified before the programme and monitored throughout it. If an action research methodology is adopted, formative evaluation can assist in giving continuous feedback to teachers, students, and administrators on the strengths and weaknesses of the programme. Such feedback can help to improve the programme as it develops.

The use of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies will increase the robustness of programme evaluation. Combined methodologies also ensure that a wide variety of assessments will be used.

A team approach and a variety of evaluation methods give the opportunity to triangulate evaluation material, thus increasing the validity and reliability of the findings. Methodological triangulation can be achieved by combining such methods as observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Investigator triangulation can be achieved by using a number of teachers in a team (for example, three teachers working together on the evaluation). This allows for some common observations and some different ones.

Some different methods that can help in programme evaluation are as follows:

Classroom observation data is commonly used in programme evaluation. The teacher may devise a structured observational checklist that relates to the goals of the programme and use it to observe and record evidence of behaviour in students at set time intervals.

Teacher diaries and daily logs that focus on key areas of the programme give rich data on actual achievements, or omissions, related to programme goals and objectives. Specific incidents with particular students help to illustrate such evidence.

Student self-assessments give valuable information about the programme. Students can be guided to focus their evaluations on educational goals that are key features of the programme, for example:

The programme helped me to increase my creative thinking:
1. a great deal
2. quite a bit
3. not at all.

This helps to increase the validity of self-assessments. Self-assessments can also help to complement information on the affective domain, including attitudes, which are important aspects of programme evaluation.

Some *standardised tests* may be relevant for pre- and post-test designs. However, relevant standardised tests for the purpose of evaluating a particular programme may be hard to find. Increased scores (gain scores) from pre- to post-test time need to be significantly higher than could be expected from normal increases through maturation and educational experiences.

Some evaluation studies use *control* and *experimental groups* to demonstrate significant improvement in learning outcomes. However, there are sometimes ethical and other problems in finding a suitable control group within a school where the programme is being conducted, for example, parents wanting their child to participate within the experimental group.

Teacher-made tests that may be designed specifically to match programme objectives have, on the whole, higher validity than standardised tests. However, their reliability is usually lower. Another difficulty with teacher-made tests (and most standardised tests) is the "ceiling effect", whereby gifted and talented students score at the top of the range. When this happens in a pre- or post-test situation, there is little or no room for gain scores to occur and to reflect favourably on the programme. This may be the fault of the test rather than the programme. It is therefore a useful idea for teachers to pilot their tests before using them for evaluation purposes.

Checklists, rating scales, and *anecdotal records* are all useful forms of assessment that can be used for programme evaluation. Some ready-made rating scales (e.g. Renzulli and Reis, 1985) may suit the purpose. If not, teachers can develop their own. With the major programme objectives in mind, the classroom teacher can construct some useful checklists and rating scales using either descriptive or numerical scales. Texts such as Linn and Gronlund (1995) offer helpful suggestions for constructing checklists and rating scales.

Product evaluation is useful for assessing student work in gifted and talented programmes. Products are often the outcome of Renzulli's enrichment type III activities, and the student product assessment form (Renzulli and Reis, 1985) is an example of such an assessment. Product evaluation is suited to a wide range of products, including science exhibits, drama productions, art works, craft, music performance, and social studies.

Teachers can design their own product assessment forms, either working together or by consulting colleagues. It is always desirable to have more than one rater to evaluate products and to first obtain an acceptable degree of inter-reliability before judging students' products. If adopted as part of formative evaluation, product assessment forms can be used at the beginning of the programme and at appropriate points during the programme to monitor improvement in performance.

Interviews and *questionnaires* are amongst the most commonly used methods to evaluate gifted and talented programmes. *Interviews* are typically carried out with students and parents. Interview schedules should be carefully prepared and focus on key aspects of the programme that are best investigated in an open-ended way. Analysing the responses from interviews is demanding and time-consuming, so the aim is to sample just as many subjects as is necessary to yield reliable results.

Questionnaires are effective in tapping a wide range of programme attributes. However, it is always necessary to have an eye on the length of the questionnaire. Most of the questions should be closed (easy for scoring), but one or two open-ended questions, such as "What did you like about the programme?" and "How could the programme be improved?", are always worthwhile.

Focus groups are a useful interview forum for evaluating the effectiveness of programmes. They are a particularly useful and efficient first step in the evaluation process – even ahead of individual interviews or questionnaires. They yield a great variety of responses that can be used as the basis of questions for structured interview schedules and items for questionnaires. Groups of seven or eight students or parents are ideal for this purpose. Questions for the focus group should be central and broad-ranging, with encouragement of open and honest discussion. The focus group leader should be seen as a facilitator of the discussion.

Evaluation models can be used by individual teachers to assess the effectiveness of programmes for the gifted and talented. The relevance of some methods will vary according to the type of programme being evaluated. Systematic and comprehensive programme evaluations are likely to use *curriculum models* such as the Purdue Three–stage Model (Moon, Feldhusen and Dillon, 1994) or the Renzulli Model (Renzulli and Reis, 1985). The latter contains examples of parent and student questionnaires, a student product assessment form, a type I enrichment evaluation form, and a scale for evaluating creativity teaching materials.

VanTassel-Baska and Avery (1997) recommend that multiple methods be used in programme evaluations and that evaluation focuses on:
- a review of programme documentation;
- interviews with the principal and other selected programme staff;
- classroom observations;
- questionnaire surveys to parents and students;
- focus groups for relevant stakeholders.

Once teachers have done the initial work in designing rating scales, checklists, and questionnaires, they have the beginning of a repertoire of assessment instruments that can be used in the future, albeit modified to fit other programme objectives.

The following do's and don't's offer guidelines for programme evaluation:

DO

1. Be absolutely clear about the reason for conducting the evaluation.
2. Know who the stakeholders are (for example, parents, boards of trustees, students and the community), and actively involve them in the evaluation as far as possible.
3. Limit the scope of the evaluation to a manageable number of research questions.
4. Locate or develop information sources (for example, tests, interview schedules, questionnaires, and portfolios).
5. Be honest about shortcomings in the evaluation design and ensure that these are recognised.
6. Allow enough time to conduct a thorough evaluation.
7. Ensure that human and financial resources are available to support the evaluation plan.
8. Devise a comprehensive written plan *before* beginning the evaluation.
9. Be prepared to change the plan during the course of the evaluation as circumstances dictate; evaluations can be formative as well as summative.
10. Fit the evaluation to the programme, not the other way around.

DON'T

1. Undertake an evaluation to justify a decision that has already been made.
2. Attempt to carry out an evaluation that is beyond your capabilities.
3. Conduct an evaluation without a properly worked out plan.
4. Provide information (for example, statistical analyses) that is beyond the sophistication of those who will read the report.
5. Neglect to consider participants' rights to privacy and confidentiality.
6. Confuse statistical significance with educational and practical significance.
7. Provide a report that is beyond the comprehension and needs of the recipients.
8. Agree to extend the scope of the evaluation without also extending the time line and increasing the budget.
9. Forget to involve stakeholders in decision-making.
10. Be tempted in planning the evaluation to address questions that are either inappropriate or unanswerable.

(Carter, 1991, adapted by Reid, 1996)

Summary: Programme Evaluation

- Programme evaluation is a necessary aspect of gifted education. It should examine all programme components by using a variety of methods and by involving the entire school community.
- Programme evaluation must have a clear purpose, be supported by a comprehensive written plan, and be designed to make changes or adjustments to programmes according to outcomes.
- Programme evaluation should be both formative and summative, fitting the evaluation to the programme, not the other way round.

Books

Braggett, E. (1997). *Differentiated Programs for Primary Schools: Units of Work for Gifted and Talented Students* and *Differentiated Programs for Secondary Schools: Units of Work for Gifted and Talented Students*. Melbourne: Hawker-Brownlow.
Developed in Australia, these books are particularly relevant to classroom teachers in New Zealand. A "how-to" guide for curriculum changes, each book includes units of work across the content areas.

Cathcart, R. (1994). *They're Not Bringing My Brain Out*. Auckland: REACH Publications.
Designed in New Zealand, the REACH model provides an excellent framework for the development and implementation of programmes for children with special abilities. This is a practical guide based on sound theory and research.

Clark, B. (1997). *Growing up Gifted* (5th ed.). New York: Merrill.
A classic book in the field of education, *Growing up Gifted* provides readers with a wide range of information about the education of children with special abilities. Cognitive social-emotional development, programming options, and important contemporary issues are covered.

Colangelo, N. and Davis, G.A. (1997). *Handbook of Gifted Education* (2nd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
This comprehensive textbook, which reflects the most recent trends and directions for gifted education worldwide, also gives readers insight from some of the field's most eminent authors. Concepts and identification, programming, creativity, and special topics are addressed in the text.

Davis, G. and Rimm, S. (1997). *Education of the Gifted and Talented* (4th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
This text provides a comprehensive view of gifted education. Although US-based, the book encompasses everything from curriculum models to programme evaluation. It provides specific information in a detailed fashion, with many excellent appendices of examples.

McAlpine, D. and Moltzen, R. (1996). *Gifted and Talented: New Zealand Perspectives*. Palmerston North: Massey University, E.R.D.C. Press.
The first comprehensive text on the education of children with special abilities in New Zealand, this book reflects an inclusive approach to their education. It addresses policy issues, characteristics and identification methods, educational programmes, and contemporary issues. A feature of the book is the development of special abilities across a range of curriculum areas. Written by professionals in education from across New Zealand, this text serves as a valuable resource.

Winebrenner, S. (1992). *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom*. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.
A practical, user-friendly guide for teachers interested in better meeting the needs of gifted students in the regular classroom. The book includes samples of contracts, letters, evaluation tools, and practical ideas.

Journals

Apex: An Educational Journal for Teachers and Parents of Gifted and Talented Children
Published by the New Zealand Association for Gifted Children, Inc., this journal features research and practice in the area of gifted education within New Zealand. The journal is written as a review of current ideas and teaching practices and is designed to meet the needs of teachers, school administrators, and parents.

The Australasian Journal of Gifted Education
Published by the Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented, this refereed journal features articles on research, theory, and practice in the field of gifted education. An additional feature is the inclusion of book and material reviews.

Gifted Child Quarterly
Published by the National Association for Gifted Children (US), this refereed journal features current research and theory in gifted education. Many of the articles are based upon qualitative and quantitative research. The bridge between research and practice is often clearly established for readers.

Gifted Child Today
This peer-review journal is very teacher-friendly and contains a large number of practical classroom ideas for teachers and parents of children with special abilities. The journal is well received internationally, and features the works of many professionals in the field of gifted education.

Roeper Review
Produced by the Roeper School, a school for gifted students in the US, this journal is one of the best in the field. Published monthly, *Roeper Review* provides readers with an array of research related to both theory and practice in gifted education.

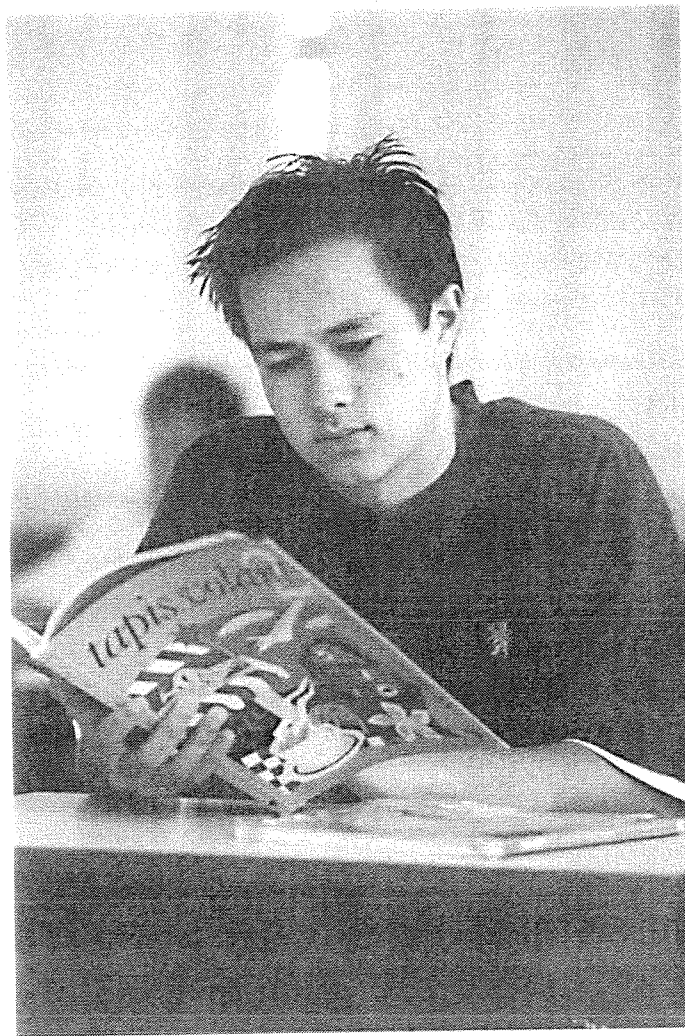*Tall Poppies Gifted Children Their Future: Our Challenge*
Geared towards meeting the needs of parents and teachers, this journal is also published by the New Zealand Association for Gifted Children, Inc. Published four times a year, it features works by parents, practising teachers, and gifted children. It includes announcements of new books, workshops, and programmes.
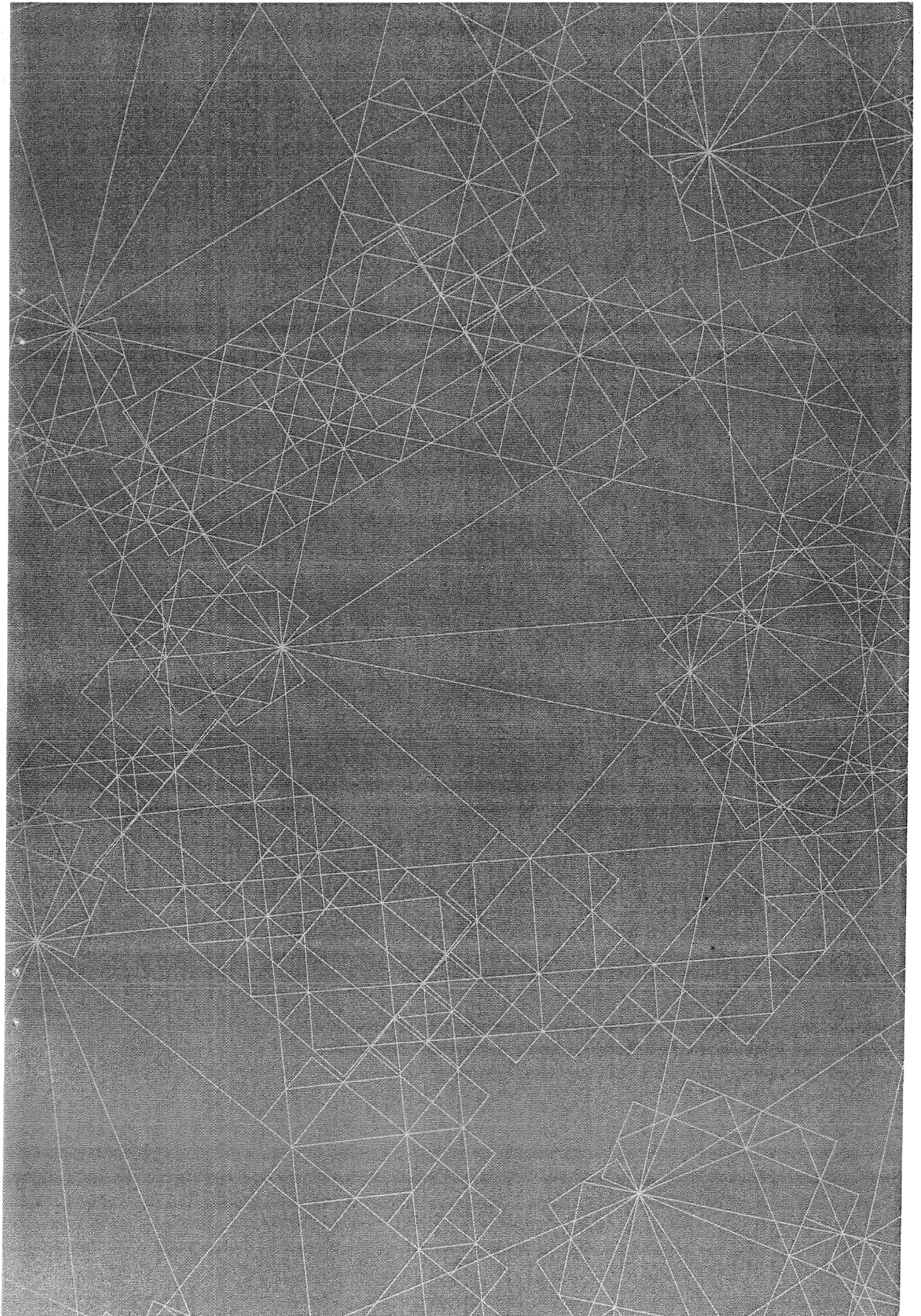
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