Real-World
Independent Projects

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Inadequacies Common to Most Gifted Education Materials

- Topics are too subject-specific.
- Activities lack clear, concise objectives.
- Tasks fail to engage high-level thinking.
- Student work cannot be reliably, objectively assessed.
- Material is not relevant to students’ lives.
- Exercises are short-term and unrelated.
Work hand-in-hand with curriculum compacting and curriculum acceleration.

Incorporate all subject areas.

Include real-world topics (relevant & lasting).

Be in-depth and long-term.

Work in any type of educational setting.

Contain creative objectives that foster thinking at the highest levels.
Program Goals Accomplished

- Use concrete assessments that show true growth.
- Incorporate differentiation of all types.
- Foster a friendly sense of competition.
- Integrate project-based rubrics with great variety.
- Design for independence as well as cooperation.
- Provide opportunities for student presentation in front of real audiences.
- Motivate students’ personal desire to learn.
Program Foundation

4 real-world-based independent projects, aligned with Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives lasting ten weeks each.

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Culmination of Each Project

- Portfolio
- Display board and exhibit
- Formal classroom presentation
- Informal presentation at an expo event
- Teacher assessment
- Student self-assessment
Envision: Grade 5 Projects

Project 1: Travel Passport
Plan every aspect of a trip from start to finish within a specified budget.

Project 2: Career Aspiration
Research and choose a career and all of the education required to accomplish this major life goal.
Envision: Grade 5 Projects Ctd.

Project 3: Financial Adventure
Plan personal finances and future purchases based on the average salary of a chosen career.

Project 4: Knowledge Quest
Thoroughly investigate and report on a meaningful topic of choice.
Travel Passport Sample Outcomes

» Travel plans question sets (10)*
   destination, time, transportation, gear, pet, etc.
» Daily itinerary*
» Expense chart*
» Computer-generated graph*
» Travel memoir*
» Route map*
» Postcard*
» Three-dimensional visual
*Independence*

» Student reference cards designed to accompany objectives needing more explanation.
Career Aspiration Sample Outcomes

• Career interest inventory*
• Career choice question sets (11)
• Career choice interview*
• Career path flow chart*
• Education and training question sets (6)
• Expense charts and graphs*
• Computer-generated brochure*
• Professional cover letter*, resume* and post-interview thank-you letter*
• Route maps*
Career Aspiration Sample Objective

• **Total Career Path Expenses and Funding** (3 points): Use your first-year expense charts to calculate the total amount you will spend during the entire time of your education or training. To accomplish this, multiply each first-year total by the number of years required for that stage of your education.

Think about and research different funding options that could help finance your education. What options will be available to you? Which do you think you would choose? Explain why.
Financial Adventure Sample Outcomes

- Job-offer acceptance letter*
- Salary breakdown* - glossary
- Detailed budget*
- Opportunity costs
- Roommate decision - questionnaire and discussion guide
- Purchases for future
- Model or floor plan of future home*
Knowledge Quest Sample Outcomes

◊ Inquiry-based research*
◊ Semantic map*
◊ Hot-list chart*
◊ Survey*
◊ Double bar graph*
◊ Newspaper*
◊ Game
◊ Prediction illustration
◊ Demonstration
Envision: Grade 4 Projects

Project 1: Backyard Getaway
Design a complete, personalized dream backyard using one acre of land.

Project 2: Environmental Declaration
Acquire a deep awareness of an environmental issue and have a voice in the matter.
Envision: Grade 4 Projects

Project 3: Civic Mission
Interact and learn within the community while performing a service.

Project 4: Fitness Pursuit
Develop an in-depth plan of healthy habits by which to live.
Backyard Getaway Sample Outcomes

- Five areas: relaxation, recreation, flower or food garden, state or country tribute, water habitat
- Relaxation area diorama*
- Water habitat food chain*
- Water cycle poem*
- Flower or food garden flip book
- Flower or food garden interdependence fictional story*
- State or country tribute mini museum
- Backyard Getaway model
Environmental Declaration Sample Outcomes

• Special terms crossword puzzle*
• Computer-generated line graph*
• Computer-generated mailing list*
• Formal persuasive letter *
• Computer-designed bumper sticker*
• “What’s right?” illustration
• “Do’s and don’ts” poster
• Documentary*
Civic Mission Sample Outcomes

- Personal interests and talents profile
- Academic goal*
- Service action plan*
- Computer-generated reflection journal
- Computer-designed t-shirt*
- Event preparations and participation
- Mobile of learning*
- Personal challenge essay
- Teach a lesson*

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Fitness Pursuit Sample Outcomes

- Sleep log*
- Computer-generated double line graph*
- Personal food pyramid*
- Healthy eating regimen
- Health benefits sentence scramble*
- Exercise duration clocks*
- Weekly homework schedule
- One-month master calendar
Envision: Grade 3 Projects

- Project 1: Pet Parade
  - Choose and research a pet to adopt or purchase in the future.

- Project 2: Giving Journey
  - Choose a gift for someone, and create a plan to work for it.
Envision: Grade 3 Projects

- Project 3: Discovery Science
  - Design and conduct a scientific experiment.

- Project 4: Curiosity Expedition
  - Research an exciting topic of your choice.
Pet Parade

- Pet Choice Picture Chart (brainstorm)
- Traits List
- Favorite Finds (top 2)
- Computer-Generated Pet Recipes (2)
- Adjective Wheels
- Life Cycle Illustrations
- Final Pet Choice Song
- Detailed Pet Supply and Cost Table
- Entertainment Comic Strip
- Computer-Generated Monthly Care Schedule
- Pet Toy

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Giving Journey

» Wish Hearts, Benefits and Ranking
» Special Person Collage
» Gift Choice Comparison Summary and Decision
» Computer-Generated Service Menu
» Greeting Card
» Fable
» Computer-Generated Service Flyer
» Earnings Thermometer
Curiosity Expedition

• Topic Train Cars
• Topic Train
• Question Cone
• Non-Fiction Picture Book
• Informational Bookmark
• Learning Center
• Break the Code
• Acrostic Poem
• Information Bag

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Envision: Grade 2 Project

- Project 1: Party Plan
  - Plan a themed party to celebrate a special event.
Party Plan

• Type of party selection
• Theme selection
• Party banner
• Planning guides
• Environmental strategies
• Party game
• Craft creation and model
• Computer-created invitation
• Food and drink budget poster
• Serving area illustration
Differentiation

✦ **By Content:** Students use a variety of information sources that suit their individual needs.

✦ **By Process:** Project guidelines explain what is required, but each student develops his or her own process for achieving those end results.

✦ **By Product:** Each student’s products are creatively unique. Project guidelines have been carefully designed to encourage creativity, which leads to highly individualized results.
Differentiation

- **By Ability Level:** Because project objectives are open-ended, students take learning to their own levels of achievement.

- **By Interest:** Only the general topic or challenge is provided to students. From there, students make numerous choices based on their own personal interests to guide their project outcomes.

- **By Learning Style:** Because students work independently, they process project information in whatever learning styles best suit them.
Tools I Use

- Planning Guide (9-12 weeks)
- Alignments with Blooms
- Parent/Student Letters
- Student Instruction Guides with Points
- Student Resource Cards
- Checkpoint Organizers and Records
- Invitations, Certificates, Signs
- Posters, Bulletin Board Banner
- Teacher Assessments/Student Self-Assessments
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