The New BC Curriculum

WHAT'S IN IT FOR GIFTED LEARNERS?

A PRESENTATION TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE OF THE GIFTED CHILDREN'S ASSOCIATION OF BC BY MAUREEN MCDERMID

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OUR COLLECTIVE GOAL: A RESPONSIVE, MORE PERSONALIZED CURRICULUM THAT RESPONDS TO THE LEARNING NEEDS OF A DIVERSITY OF LEARNERS AND PREPARES OUR STUDENTS FOR A 21ST CENTURY WORLD.

Think of a Time

It’s true, schools and teachers have a lasting impact on our lives!

Reflect for a moment on your school experiences, the positive ones ☺

What do you recall that was a memorable learning moment for you in school?

Three Perspectives

WHAT'S THE SAME AND WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

Curriculum Aspect	Traditional	New BC Curriculum
View of learner 	• Student to be shaped by teacher • Tabula rasa – blank slate upon which to write learning • Responder to stimuli and reinforcement	• Active inquirer and experimenter • Constructs knowledge jointly with teacher and other students • **Active participant in developing skills and solving problems** • Observer and imitator of others in the environment

Curriculum Aspect	Traditional	New BC Curriculum
Nature of tasks 	• Task defined by teacher • Discrete • Right answers • Individually performed • Memory intensive • Drill and practice • Text based and reading intensive • Abstract, few concrete experiences • Little or no choice of activities • Same for all students • Product oriented	• Teacher and students define the problem to be addressed • Process: often trial and error, experimentation • Goal directed, concrete active experiences • **Sensitive to learners prior experience and level of development** • Independent performance • Process oriented

Curriculum Aspect	Traditional	New BC Curriculum
Role of the teacher 	• Prescribe content • Present instruction • Determine acceptable paths from problems to solutions • Determine acceptable products • Determine goals and objectives • Select materials and set up activities • Prepare and administer tests • Evaluate learners • Maintain order • Control behavior • Watch for cheating • Accountable to principal	• **Recognize differing perspectives and seek previous knowledge of learners** • **Chose tasks appropriate for learners abilities and needs** • **Structure difficulty of tasks to match learners skill** • Adjust levels of support • Allow choice of tasks • Gradually shift responsibility for tasks to learners as they grow • Articulate how the processes work and why the tasks are important • Redirect learners rather than correcting errors • Use questions and hints to help problem solving or understanding of new concepts

What are the Change features?

Content is organized starting with an identification of several **BIG Ideas** for each subject area at each grade level.

Curriculum model based on **know, do, understand** (KDU).

Personalization of the learning experience draws learners into the learning experiences and **shares responsibility for learning**, enables **students to understand their own learning.**

Core competencies are identified and learning experiences are designed to address these competencies.

BIG Ideas

CONCEPTUAL LEARNING

Organizing Content starting with BIG ideas

Each subject at each grade is now organized to start with consideration of 3 to 5 'Big Ideas'.

These are **generalizations, principles and the key concepts,** 'essential learnings' important in the area of learning.

Students are expected to demonstrate **'understanding'** of these BIG Ideas!

https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/science/k

Science – BIG Ideas, Grade 2

Living things have life ***cycles*** adapted to their environment.

*Sample questions to support **inquiry** with students*

- Why are life *cycles* important?
- How are the life *cycles* of local plants and animals similar and different?
- How do offspring compare to their parents?

Science BIG Ideas, Grade 9

The biosphere, geosphere, hydrosphere, and atmosphere are interconnected, as matter ***cycles*** and energy flows through them.

*Sample questions to support **inquiry** with students:*

- How do Earth's major spheres interact?
- How do matter and energy move through ecosystems?
- How do First Peoples view the *cycling* of matter and energy?

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Core competencies

HTTPS://CURRICULUM.GOV.BC.CA/COMPETENCIES

The Core Competencies: Thinking Competency

Critical thinking

Creativity and innovation

The thinking competency encompasses the knowledge, skills and processes we associate with intellectual development.

It is through their competency as thinkers that students take subject-specific concepts and content and transform them into a new understanding.

Thinking competence includes specific thinking skills as well as habits of mind, and metacognitive awareness.

Core Competencies: Communication

Communications literacy

Digital literacy

The communication competency encompasses the set of abilities that students use to impart and exchange information, experiences and ideas, to explore the world around them, and to understand and effectively engage in the use of digital media.

Core Competencies: Personal and Social

Positive Personal

Cultural Identity

Personal and social competency is the set of abilities that relate to students' identity in the world, both as individuals and as members of their community and society.

Personal and social competency encompasses the abilities students need to thrive as individuals, to understand and care about themselves and others, and to find and achieve their purposes in the world.

Focus on UNDERSTANDING

An <u>understanding</u> is a mental construct, an abstraction made by the human mind to make sense of and connect many pieces of knowledge.

If students understand, then they can provide **evidence of that <u>understanding</u>** by showing that they know and can do certain specific things.

They can APPLY.

Knowledge vs. understanding (Wiggins/McTighe,2005)

Knowledge	Understanding
The facts	The meaning of the facts
A body of coherent facts	The 'Theory" that provides coherence and meaning to those facts
Verifiable claims	Fallible, in-process theories
Right or wrong	A matter of degree of sophistication
I know something to be true	I understand why it is, what makes it so
I respond on cue to what I know	I judge when to and when not to use what I know

Personalized learning

- **Does not** mean each student is on a completely individualized program
- **Does** mean that students are setting goals, reflecting on their work, setting new goals for learning based on their reflections and taking more control of their learning.
- **Place-based learning** means more attention to the community students live in and to what the individual brings to learning opportunities.

Responding to the attributes of high ability learners

Reflecting

Think of your child as a learner…

Considering the unique learning needs of your child, what aspect(s) of this new curriculum will support your child's specific needs?

How far will this curriculum go in responding to those needs?

- Identification
- IEPs for focused support
- Learning with like-minded learners
- Acceptance/opportunities for subject acceleration
- Opportunities for innovation, creativity

Preparation for a 21st Century World

The part schools play in the development of citizens educated for the 21st Century is to provide a foundation for the :

- **Ability to be thoughtful**, think critically and communicate information from a broad knowledge base
- **Capacity to make independent decisions**
- Development of creativity, flexibility and motivation and to **have a positive self-image**

Students to be cooperative, principled and respectful of others regardless of differences.

Or, as the Microsoft Corporation markets Cloud Computing…

Moving Information into insight