

Introduction to

**Curriculum
Design
in
Gifted
Education**

Introduction to

Curriculum Design in Gifted Education

Edited by
Kristen R. Stephens, Ph.D.,
and Frances A. Karnes, Ph.D.



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Prufrock Press Inc.
P.O. Box 8813
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction..... vii
Kristen R. Stephens and Frances A. Karnes

Section I: Foundations

Chapter 1: In Context: Gifted Characteristics and
the Implications for Curriculum3
Angela M. Housand

Chapter 2: History of Gifted and Advanced Academic
Curriculum Theory and Practice23
Elissa Brown

Chapter 3: General Curriculum Design: Principles
and Best Practices.....41
Jessica A. Hockett and Catherine Brighton

Chapter 4: Aligning Curriculum to Standards63
Susan K. Johnsen

Section II: Survey of Curriculum Models

Chapter 5: Survey of Curriculum Models in Gifted Education:
Frameworks for Developing and Implementing
Differentiated Curricula95
Ann Robinson and Audrey Tabler

Section III: Curriculum in the Core Subject Areas

Chapter 6: Language Arts Curriculum for Gifted Learners..... 129
Elizabeth A. Fogarty

Chapter 7: Mathematics Curriculum for Gifted Learners..... 151
M. Katherine Gavin

Chapter 8: Science Curriculum for Gifted Learners 175
Michael S. Matthews

Chapter 9: Social Studies Curriculum for Gifted Learners 195
Shelagh A. Gallagher

.....
.....
Introduction to Curriculum Design in Gifted Education

**Section IV: The Role of Assessment
in Curriculum Development**

Chapter 10: Curriculum Implementation, Management,
and Assessment: Special Consideration and Best Practices 223
Carolyn M. Callahan

**Section V: Trends and Future Directions
for Curriculum for the Gifted**

Chapter 11: Creativity and Curriculum for the Gifted..... 243
Bonnie Cramond and Sarah E. Sumners

Chapter 12: The Role of Technology in Curriculum
for the Gifted: From Little Acorns Grow Mighty Oaks..... 261
Brian C. Housand

Chapter 13: Service-Learning in Gifted Education:
Addressing Cognition and Affective Domains..... 281
Kristen R. Stephens, David Malone, and Alissa P. Griffith

Chapter 14: Affective Curriculum: Proactively
Addressing the Challenges of Growing Up..... 307
Jean Sunde Peterson

Chapter 15: Culturally Responsive and Relevant Curriculum:
The Revised Bloom-Banks Matrix 331
Donna Y. Ford and Michelle Frazier Trotman Scott

About the Editors..... 351

About the Authors 353



CHAPTER 15

Culturally Responsive and Relevant Curriculum

The Revised Bloom-Banks Matrix

Donna Y. Ford and Michelle Frazier Trotman Scott

Introduction

African American and Hispanic students are underrepresented in gifted education. And in general, many are underachieving in schools partly due to a lack of interest personally and culturally in the content and topics being taught. This chapter briefly discusses the underrepresentation of African American and Hispanic students in gifted programs, and then hones in on curricula and program challenges, issues, and needs using Bloom's taxonomy and Banks' multicultural curriculum model. The chapter merges these two models and provides a discussion of the revised Ford-Harris Matrix (Ford, 2011) also known as the revised Bloom-Banks Matrix, and describes a color-coded layout of the matrix modified by

Introduction to Curriculum Design in Gifted Education

Trotman Scott (2014a, 2014b) accompanied by pros and cons of certain components of the matrix.

Michael (a pseudonym) is a fifth-grade African American student at Johnson Elementary School in Georgia. He lives with his mother and interacts frequently with his father who lives in Texas. Michael is a young fifth grader who turned 10 in October. Michael enrolled in kindergarten when he was 4 years old because he attended a private school and fared well in school, earning A's and B's in most of his academic classes.

According to his mother, Shannon, Michael does not exhibit age-appropriate behaviors. As a matter of fact, Michael receives low scores in behavior conduct from his teachers—all of whom are White. Although his work is satisfactory, it tends to be sloppy and at times is not turned in. Shannon has observed his interactions with peers and describes his behavior as selfish or self-centered. She attributes this behavior to him being a “spoiled only child.” However, his mother does not consider Michael's behavior disrespectful, disobedient, or defiant.

Shannon was pleased with her son's scholastic progress until he entered third grade; at that time, he was placed with a White female teacher entering her first year in the profession. The novice teacher lacked classroom management skills and, according to Michael's mother, the teacher called or e-mailed her at least two times per week with negative reports ranging from Michael not turning in homework to him talking in class and being “overly active.” Shannon was upset about this, but her anger turned to indignation and frustration upon learning that several parents of African American students enrolled in this class had received the same types of communication. Nonetheless, she disciplined Michael accordingly (e.g., loss of television, gaming system, and/or music privileges) in her desire to support teachers and improve her son's academic experiences.

Michael is also very athletic and excels in multiple sports. He enjoys interacting with teammates and traveling to related games and activities. Shannon used sports as leverage and has threatened to impose a suspension from extracurricular activities if he did not show more effort and improved behavior (according to his teacher) in class. Yet, Michael's lack of motivation persists. Michael thrives when working on assignments that focus on topics of interest to him. This young student eventually confessed to his mother that he hates school. He does not see himself (a Black male) in the books, stories, and lesson plans in most cases and bemoans that Black History Month and focusing on dead Black heroes are not enough and trouble him. He questions why President Obama is not talked about

Culturally Responsive and Relevant Curriculum

in his classes and wonders why teachers seem to be uncomfortable talking about Black people and contemporary issues.

There are many students of color like Michael in our classrooms. They show up to school with a canvas ready to be painted with the colors of knowledge, heritage, and power. However, when the paint of knowledge mainly or only consists of one hue, it becomes uninteresting, and for many, the paint is deemed useless or colorless. However, if teachers are equipped with *and use* different colors to show students how to make new colors and/or use different mediums, students like Michael will be eager to learn and engage.

Throughout the nation, African American students are underrepresented in gifted education by almost 50% and Hispanic students by some 40% (Ford, 2010, 2011, 2013). When combined, more than 500,000 Black and Hispanic students are being denied gifted education classes and services. These national statistics are troubling and prevalent in most states and districts.

Teachers must differentiate instruction to meet the needs of gifted students, and differentiation must include consideration of culture. However, it is highly likely that most differentiated content has a monocultural focus, and thus may not peak the interest of those students whose culture is not reflected in the curriculum. The academic performance of gifted students would likely increase if culture was prioritized when differentiating instruction and developing curriculum.

Differentiation is discussed extensively in gifted education, which is a recognition that instruction that may be effective with one student or group of students may also be ineffective or not work as well with another student or group of students. Ineffective instruction leads to poor performance and academic outcomes. Ineffective instruction includes instruction that is not responsive to students' culture and racial identity (Ford, 2011). As such, differentiation via multicultural education holds potential for increasing rigor and relevance for all students, but in particular for gifted Black and Hispanic students, many of whom complain about being disinterested in school and not seeing themselves positively reflected in the literature, materials, and lesson plans (see Ford, 2011; Grantham, Trotman Scott, & Harmon, 2013). Differentiated multicultural education, using the work of Ford who created the original and updated Bloom-Banks Matrix (Ford, 2011; Ford & Harris, 1999), is one means of addressing the needs of all gifted students. With students of color in mind, especially Black and



Introduction to Curriculum Design in Gifted Education

Hispanic students, the matrix can be used to differentiate instruction to include rigor (Bloom, 1956) *and* relevance (Banks, 2009).

Differentiation: Rigor and Relevance

All instructional procedures—materials, lectures, daily assignments, summative and formative assessments—should be culturally fair and responsive. Teachers must ensure that assignments and materials accurately, equally, and equitably represent the experiences, realities, and views of culturally different students, and that they do not contain biased, discriminatory, or offensive language, materials, and examples. Only then are we on the essential journey to making sure that instruction is culturally responsive and to increasing the likelihood that gifted students of color, like Michael, are engaged and motivated by what is being taught.

To add relevance and rigor to assignments, multiple levels of outcome criteria must be planned. Gifted students should be provided with critical thinking and problem-solving opportunities that embrace the characteristics of culturally different students, meet their needs, and include culturally responsive practices, theories, and research.

Students become more interested and want to be engaged when the curricula is rigorous and relevant. Disengaged students may begin to underachieve and/or disrupt the class. In some districts, if students underachieve, they may be dismissed from the gifted program; this practice is objectionable because the students are still gifted even if their performance is low. High performance is not the hallmark of being gifted (Ford, 2010). Students, including those who are gifted, underachieve for a host of reasons (e.g., peer pressures, self-efficacy, special education need such as a learning disability, lack of challenge, personal and family transitions, health, and more; Siegle, 2012; Siegle & McCoach, 2005; Whitmore, 1980). Given that they have been identified as gifted but are underperforming, educational professionals must invest in them—not give up on them. If not, the waste of gifts and talents takes its toll on students and society at large (Grantham et al., 2013). A multicultural gifted approach developed by Ford (2011) and Ford and Harris (1999) can be used to increase the

Culturally Responsive and Relevant Curriculum

interest, engagement, and achievement of gifted students who are disconnected from what they are learning and experiencing in schools.

Much of the curriculum used in typical classrooms fails to represent the population served by teachers. That is, too few schools have adopted multicultural curricula. Moreover, few teacher preparation programs have trained teacher candidates with the necessary skills to create lesson plans that are culturally responsive. The same holds true for professional development opportunities offered to teachers (Ford, 2011).

Selected resources and materials must be carefully examined to ensure that specific cultural groups are not negatively represented, stereotyped, and/or completely omitted from the proposed curriculum (Ford, 2011; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009). The authenticity and integrity of the curriculum content and materials must also be evident to make sure that the roles reflected within the curricula do not promote superiority, inferiority, and/or minimize and trivialize a specific racial and cultural group.

In the following section, Ford's revised Bloom-Banks Matrix is described. To begin with, an overview of the revised Bloom's taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002) will be addressed followed by Banks's (2009) model of how to infuse rigorous multicultural content into the curriculum for all students.

Bloom-Banks Matrix: An Overview

When teachers differentiate, the content, process, product, and learning environment are considered in meaningful ways. To successfully or effectively differentiate, teachers must modify the curriculum, instruction, and outcomes to meet the needs of individual and groups of students (Adams & Pierce, 2010; Tomlinson, 2001, 2009); when implemented using a cultural lens, this allows students to master academic content while also addressing their diverse academic, cultural, and learning needs. Cultural diversity or differences are important and must be addressed in a culturally responsive manner. In other words, colorblindness is ineffective for students and fails to promote educational experiences that are rigorous and relevant.

Rigor and Bloom's taxonomy. Bloom's taxonomy (original: Bloom, 1956; revised: Krathwohl, 2002) is often used to ensure rigor, meaning, critical thinking, and problem solving are addressed in the curriculum. When teachers use either version of Bloom's taxonomy to differentiate,

Introduction to Curriculum Design in Gifted Education

they adapt activities related to the same academic content based on students' abilities, skills, and readiness to engage in certain cognitive tasks.

Utilizing the cognitive domains of the revised Bloom's taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002; see Figure 15.1), teachers can: (1) determine if students are able to recall information presented in the curriculum (knowing); (2) assess if students understand the concepts of the curriculum as evidenced by their ability to explain what they learned (understanding); (3) evaluate the students' ability to demonstrate what they learned (applying); (4) gauge students' ability to understand what was learned by being able to form views, make predictions, and compare-contrast information (analyzing); (5) decide if students are able to study, judge, critique, and support what was taught and learned (evaluating); and (6) consider students' ability and skills to use information to develop new, original, and/or improved approaches (creating). Clearly, the first three levels lack rigor (i.e., knowing, understanding, and applying) as opposed to the latter three levels (i.e., analyzing, evaluating, and creating).

In many instances, teachers must rely on the formal curriculum provided by their district. Although Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, 2002) provides teachers with a means to develop differentiated lessons and activities, it does not provide them with the tools needed to infuse multiculturalism at all or in a meaningful way. When teachers differentiate curriculum, they must always infuse multicultural or culturally responsive content. Rigorous content alone is not sufficient. All content must be reflective of the world in which we live and respond to the lives and needs of our students. Banks's (2009) approach to integrating multicultural content into the curriculum allows this to happen, by giving teachers a framework to infuse high-quality diversity content into daily lesson plans, activities, and readings.

Banks's Multicultural Curriculum Model. Banks's (2009) multicultural curriculum model addresses four levels (also called approaches) of integration to help Michael and all students increase their level of awareness, enthusiasm, knowledge, and understanding about cultural and racial diversity, as well as attain a sense of social justice (Gay, 2010). This model is useful to teachers and curriculum specialists as they develop a framework for high-quality (rigorous) multicultural lessons. It offers different levels/approaches of integration, ranging from the very simplistic and pervasive contributions approach, an approach in which teachers are not required to change the curriculum and can create and/or reinforce stereotypes and misperceptions about people of color, to the more complex and often

Culturally Responsive and Relevant Curriculum

Level	Meaning and Goal	Sample Action Verbs	Sample Products
Remembering	To remember/recall	List, recall, identify, label, repeat, match, name, outline, select, tell	Exams/tests, reports of facts
Understanding	To understand/comprehend	Describe, recognize, explain, extend, generalize, identify examples, restate, paraphrase, summarize	Diagrams, drawings, outlines
Applying	To apply/use	Change, demonstrate, illustrate, interpret operate, predict, prepare, relate, sketch, solve	Demonstrations, models, reports, recipes
Analyzing	To analyze/compare	Break down, compare and contrast, categorize, debate, experiment, differentiate, distinguish, examine, illustrate	Venn diagrams, plans or prospectuses, questionnaires, reviews
Evaluating	To evaluate/study/critique	Appraise, conclude, criticize, defend, describe, discriminate, explain, justify, interpret, relate, summarize, support, value	Critiques, decision making, debates, editorials, study
Creating	To create/solve problems	Arrange, assemble, collect, combine, compile, compose, create, design, develop, devise, plan, produce, propose	Creations, inventions, poems, songs, stories

Figure 15.1. Revised Bloom's taxonomy: An overview.

Introduction to Curriculum Design in Gifted Education

neglected social action approach, where teachers empower all students to identify and solve problems through a social justice/equitable lens.

The first and basic level of Banks's (2009) Multicultural Curriculum Model is the Contributions Approach. This approach integrates cultural content into the curriculum and is most commonly used within classrooms because it requires minimal planning to implement. The contributions level focuses on heroes, holidays, food, fashion, and other discrete elements within a culture, making this level of integration the least authentic regarding the quality of multicultural engagement, rigor, and substance. At this low-level approach, students are unable to expand their knowledge base regarding culturally different groups because the delivered information is often superficial, stereotypical, and insufficient to help students gain an accurate and detailed understanding of others. The result can be new or reinforced stereotypes promoted among students by the lessons, activities, materials, and resources.

The Additive Approach is the second level on Banks's continuum; it is slightly better than the Contributions Approach. Here, multiculturalism is implemented using the existing curriculum without changing its basic or fundamental structure. The Additive Approach does not conceptualize the content, concepts, themes, and perspectives of the culturally different students, people, and events. The opposite occurs—teachers add safe and noncontroversial cultural content to the curriculum, making the background knowledge needed to understand the content minimal and devoid of depth and substance. Although the information presented at this level is more substantive than that of the Contributions Approach, teachers typically add an assignment to the existing curriculum that requires students to engage in and obtain minimal knowledge of non-White groups and of themselves, meaning lack of self-reflection. Therefore, students will not be challenged or required to understand the significance of the culturally different individuals and groups in the larger scheme of things.

The third level of multicultural integration, the Transformation Approach, represents high-quality content per Bloom's taxonomy. Yet, unlike the previous two levels, Transformation presents the significance of events, issues, problems, and themes using substantive multicultural content and material. This level or approach changes the basic goals, structure, and nature of the curricula used in the classroom, and allows students to obtain a deeper knowledge base—one that promotes multiple views, opposing views, empathy, and deep or critical understanding of people, issues, and events. When multiculturalism is infused at this level, students

Culturally Responsive and Relevant Curriculum

are able to and empowered to view and critique content from the perspectives of groups that differ from their own and examine what they are learning from more than one viewpoint. This is, of course, critical thinking; it is also empathy and compassion for oppressed individuals and groups. In other words, the Transformation Approach addresses—in deep and authentic ways—events, facts, and characteristics that enable *all* students to become more aware of and gain meaningful knowledge and resources about different cultural groups, especially those who are marginalized.

The fourth and highest level of Banks's approach to multicultural integration is Social Action. At this level, students are able to identify, analyze, and clarify important social problems and issues, make decisions, and take action to help resolve the issues or problems. When taught at this level, students are able to develop and improve their problem-solving skills, as well as skills in working with and supporting culturally different groups. At this approach, students are provided with essential information and resources needed to take actions that enhance the lives of others.

To reiterate, curriculum is incomplete and not culturally responsive if students are not provided with opportunities to think critically *and* act equitably in culturally responsive ways. Curriculum must provide students with the skills and abilities to think and learn beyond themselves and to see the world from the viewpoints of others (i.e., empathy). The revised Bloom-Banks Matrix (Ford-Harris Matrix) marries the components of the revised Bloom's taxonomy and Banks's Multicultural Curriculum Model to provide teachers with a framework that allows them to create curricula that provide a multitude of critical thinking levels while integrating multicultural content; this provides all students with a culturally responsive and rigorous education.

Ford (2011) defined a culturally responsive education as one that: (a) has an educational philosophy among educators that is not colorblind, (b) appreciates and values the cultural differences of students, (c) utilizes a curriculum that is multicultural and addresses culturally different ways of learning and understanding, and (d) assesses students using testing/evaluation that is culturally and linguistically relevant. Gifted students must be able to access a flexibly paced and advanced curricula that provides depth and breadth in their area(s) of strength, as well as curriculum and instruction that is of interest and relevance to their lives (i.e., culturally responsive education). Following these protocols will help eliminate ineffective and culturally assaultive curriculum and instruction.

Merging Bloom and Banks for Rigor and Relevance: Ford-Harris Matrix

To reiterate, the original Bloom-Banks Matrix, developed by Ford and Harris (1999) and updated by Ford (2011), combines Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom, 1956) and Banks's Multicultural Curriculum Model (2009) to provide educators with a multicultural gifted education model that reflects the goals, objectives, and perspectives of differentiated, gifted, and multicultural education. The result is 24 cells or 4 quadrants based on the six levels of Bloom by the four levels of Banks (see Figures 15.2 and 15.3). Trotman-Scott (2014a, 2014b) also color-coded the four quadrants of the matrix.

The lowest cell is knowledge-contributions (part of Quadrant 1). The highest and most substantive cell is transformation-social action; this is the cell (part of Quadrant 4) that all students and teachers are urged to reach, especially because instruction on this level enables students to engage in the highest level of critical thinking *and* multiculturalism.

The Bloom-Banks Matrix, a 4 x 6 matrix, has been color-coded for conceptual reasons as follows:

- ◆ **Red/Stop = Quadrant 1:** Low on both Bloom's taxonomy and Banks's multicultural level. When low on Bloom's taxonomy (understanding, remembering, and applying) and low on Banks's multicultural levels (contributions and additives), students will know, understand, and apply information about cultural elements, groups, and concepts but in a superficial way. Gifted students may not be challenged in either way. Moreover, the content provided within the red section (Quadrant 1), rarely provides students with multicultural growth and substance. Instruction on the red level is very common and many students may have been exposed to similar information in previous settings.
- ◆ **Yellow/Caution = Quadrant 2:** High on Bloom's taxonomy and low on Banks's multicultural levels. Students taught in this quadrant are able to compare and contrast, create, and critique information about cultural groups, concepts, and themes. This level requires that students use higher level critical thinking (analyzing, evaluating, and creating) skills. Although instruction is at a high

Culturally Responsive and Relevant Curriculum

	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analyzing	Evaluating	Creating
Contributions	Students are taught and are able to remember about cultural artifacts, events, groups, and other cultural elements.	Students are taught and show evidence of understanding about cultural artifacts, groups, etc.	Students are asked to and can apply information learned on cultural artifacts, events, etc.	Students are taught to and can analyze (e.g., compare and contrast) information about cultural artifacts, groups, etc.	Students are taught to and can evaluate facts and information based on cultural artifacts, groups, etc.	Students are required to and can create a new product from the information on cultural artifacts, groups, etc.
Additive	Students are taught and are able to remember concepts and themes about cultural groups.	Students are taught and show evidence of understanding of cultural concepts and themes.	Students are required to and can apply information learned about cultural concepts and themes.	Students are taught to and can analyze important cultural concepts and themes.	Students are taught to and can critique cultural concepts and themes.	Students are asked to and can create important information on cultural concepts and themes.
Transformation	Students are able to remember information on important cultural elements, groups, and so forth, and can understand this information from different perspectives.	Students are taught to understand and can demonstrate an understanding of important cultural concepts and themes from different perspectives.	Students are asked to and can apply their understanding of important concepts and themes from different perspectives.	Students are taught to and can analyze important cultural concepts and themes from more than one perspective.	Students are taught to and can evaluate or judge important cultural concepts and themes from different viewpoints (e.g., racially and culturally different groups).	Students are required to and can create a product based on their new perspective or the perspective of another group.
Social Action	Based on their ability to remember information about cultural artifacts, students make recommendations for social action.	Based on their understanding of important concepts and themes, students make recommendations for social action.	Students are asked to and can apply their understanding of important social and cultural issues; they make recommendations for and take action on these issues.	Students are required to and can analyze social and cultural issues from different perspectives; they take action on these issues.	Students critique important social and cultural issues and seek to make national and/or international change.	Students create a plan of action to address a social and cultural issue(s); they seek important social change.

Figure 15.2. Ford's Revised Bloom-Banks Matrix: Gifted education that is rigorous and relevant. *Note.* Adapted from Ford (2011) and Trotman-Scott (2014a, 2014b).

	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analyzing	Evaluating	Creating
Contributions	RED Quadrant 1			YELLOW Quadrant 2		
Additive						
Transformation	BLUE Quadrant 3			GREEN Quadrant 2		
Social Action						

Figure 15.3. Ford's color-coded Bloom-Banks quadrants. Note. Adapted from Ford (2011); also see Trotman-Scott (2014a, 2014b).

Culturally Responsive and Relevant Curriculum

level cognitively, teachers should proceed with caution. Minimal cultural substance is learned (contributions and additive), which can lead to students having difficulty grasping multicultural content and culturally different students in substantive ways. Ford (2011) argued that this quadrant is common in gifted education where critical thinking is espoused but in a colorblind way. Gifted students are thinking critically and solving problems with superficial multicultural content (e.g., food, fun, fashion, folklore).

- ◆ **Blue/Guarded = Quadrant 3:** Low on Bloom's taxonomy but high on Banks' multicultural levels. This quadrant provides students with opportunities to view cultural events, concepts, and themes through the lens of other cultures; however, there is little critical thinking and problem solving involved. Social action may take place, but the project is superficial, and not likely to have much impact. The curriculum provided to students elaborates on events, facts, and characteristics of culturally different groups, enabling them to become more aware of and gain additional and meaningful knowledge about different groups. In this quadrant, critical thinking and problem solving are higher than the yellow and red quadrants, but the cognitive rigor is low (knowing, understanding, and applying); however, the cultural content is rigorous (transformation and social action). We find this often among social justice educators who present deep cultural content (e.g., Afrocentric educators) but fail to focus on critical thinking and problem solving.
- ◆ **Green/Go = Quadrant 4:** High Bloom's taxonomy *and* high Banks's multicultural levels. Instruction and assignments given using Quadrant 4 allow students to think critically and solve problems (analyzing, evaluating, and creating), and view a multitude of multicultural topics, issues, and themes (transformation and social action). Importantly, they are empowered to make social and equitable changes in developmentally appropriate ways. This, as Ford (2011) indicated, is the ultimate destiny—curriculum is rigorous and relevant! Students are thinking and solving problems at the highest levels and are exposed to content that addresses cultural misunderstandings, stereotypes, and injustices, and that affirms and supports students of color. This is the win-win quadrant for all students and our educational system.

Introduction to Curriculum Design in Gifted Education

Pros and Cons of a Few Cells in the Quadrants of the Revised Bloom-Banks Matrix

Following are examples of cross-curriculum social studies and music activities for Quadrants 1, 2, and 3 of the revised Bloom-Banks Matrix, along with possible pros and cons for three of the six cells in each quadrant. There are no cons or disadvantages for Quadrant 4.

The red Quadrant 1.

Remembering-Contribution. Students are asked to name three Black musicians popular before the Civil Rights Movement. The pros of this assignment are that students will be able to remember the names of Black musicians popular before the Civil Rights Movement. Students may also be exposed to different genres and content of music performed by Black artists prior to the Civil Rights Movement.

The possible cons of this requirement are that students will not be required to provide additional information known about the Black musicians. Also, they will not be required to discuss the genre or the lyrics of the music as it relates to the times in which the music was created. Moreover, students will only be required to identify superficial content (names of musicians).

Understanding-Addition. After reading the history of *Precious Lord, Take My Hand* by the African American musician Thomas A. Dorsey, students are asked to summarize in their own words what the song meant to the composer. By completing this assignment, students will be able to identify and summarize the thoughts and feelings of an African American composer via restating. However, the information provided is basic and the information discussed will most likely be less controversial. Also, the teacher will only add to the curriculum and will not have to change the curriculum so that it reflects the meaning of music during historical time periods.

Applying-Contribution. Students are asked to create a model of the 16th Avenue Baptist Church in Birmingham, AL, where four African American girls were killed when the church was bombed. Students who complete this assignment will be able to apply new knowledge about the structure of a church (and apply math concepts during social studies class). They will also learn about the system of church design and scaling. Although students will be required to create a model, information about the church will most likely not cover information about the background of the girls or the church members. Furthermore, students will most likely

Culturally Responsive and Relevant Curriculum

know more about the structure of the church than the congregation and the meaning behind the church being bombed.

The yellow Quadrant 2.

Analyzing-Addition. Students are asked to choose a song by an African American artist that is popular today and compare the lyrics to those of a song by an African American artist that was popular during the 1960s Civil Rights Movement—analyzing the similarities and differences. Students who complete this assignment will be exposed to and will be able to review lyrics of music from the present and the past. They will also be able to compare past and present lyrics. However, students will not be given the opportunity to learn about the background of the artists or their story behind the music.

Analyzing-Contribution. Students are required to categorize the types of music written by minorities during the Civil Rights Movement. Students who complete this assignment may possibly be exposed to different genres of music than those of which they are familiar. They will also be able to identify contributions of minority musicians. However, the information obtained will be basic and will most likely focus only on contributions and not prejudices or injustices that the musicians may have faced.

Evaluating-Addition. Students are instructed to rank their choice of music genres during the Civil Rights Movement and explain why they ranked them as such. By completing this assignment, students will be able to identify and remember genres most popular during the Civil Rights Movement. However, information provided about the genres may be superficial or may be comprised of information that students already know.

The blue Quadrant 3.

Remembering-Social Action. Students are asked what they would have done if they were a musician in the 1950s to ensure that equality existed within the music industry. By answering this question, students will be able to view the perspectives of others who may have been overlooked for their contributions in music. The question requires students to provide an answer that may be packed with multicultural content. However, it only requires students to infer and does not require a higher level of thinking (i.e., analyzing, evaluating, creating).

Understanding-Transformation. Students are asked to take on the persona of a musician in the 1960s and describe how they felt when their music was recognized by the dominant culture. Students who correctly answer this question will be able to provide an explanation, from another's

Summary and Conclusion

The goal of educators must be to challenge and engage all students, especially students like Michael and other students of color who find little connection with what they are learning in gifted education classes. Teachers must utilize resources that enable and empower gifted students to engage in critical thinking, problem solving, and high-quality multicultural activities. As teachers examine the level of complexity and multicultural content in their curricular choices, they will be able to develop and implement differentiated lessons using higher levels of both the Bloom and Banks approaches. The revised Ford-Harris Matrix (Ford, 2011), specifically Quadrant 4, promotes the critical work that aids gifted students as they delve into deep multicultural content that is rigorous.

High-quality differentiation enables students to increase their levels of knowledge and skills in their area(s) of strengths. Differentiation should be based on how culture mediates learning processes. In other words, “all practice needs to be culturally responsive in order to be best practice” (Moje & Hinchman, 2004, p. 321).

Differentiating instruction is a strategy that can be used to teach all students while also maintaining the level of interest and rigor needed to keep them actively engaged. Also, when the curriculum is culturally relevant, students’ interest and motivation are likely to increase. Using the original or revised Bloom-Banks’ Matrix (Ford, 2011; Ford & Harris, 1999) will help teachers meet the academic, social-emotional, and cultural needs of all students, regardless of their academic skills and intellectual levels.

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Culturally Responsive and Relevant Curriculum

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About the Authors

Catherine Brighton, Ph.D., is the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and an associate professor at the University of Virginia in the department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education, Curry School of Education. She is a Principal Investigator with a Spencer Foundation-funded project investigating kindergarten teachers' use of literacy data to inform instruction in diverse elementary school classrooms. Further, she serves as codirector of the University of Virginia Institutes on Academic Diversity. Her current research interests include investigations surrounding classroom-level data use, high-quality teaching and learning (authentic problem solving, differentiated instruction, critical and creative thinking, and teacher content knowledge), and qualitative methodologies.

Elissa Brown, Ph.D., is distinguished lecturer and Director of the Hunter College Gifted Center. As a professor, Brown coordinates and teaches the advanced certificate program in gifted and talented education at Hunter College. She has served as an adjunct professor at several universities, including Rutgers and Duke University. She has been a state director of gifted education, a federal grant manager, a district gifted program coordinator, principal of a specialized high school and a teacher of gifted students, K–12. She is a published author in the field of gifted education and presents widely. She lives in East Harlem, NY.

Carolyn M. Callahan, Ph.D., holds a doctorate in educational psychology with an emphasis in gifted education. At the University of Virginia, she developed the graduate program in gifted education and the summer and Saturday programs for gifted students. She has served as director of the University of Virginia National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented for 18 years. Her research has resulted in publications across a broad range

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About the Authors

Learners (CEC-DDEL). Ford is the cochair of the special interest group called Gifted-Racial Accountability and Cultural Equity (G-RACE).

Michelle Frazier Trotman Scott, Ph.D., is an associate professor at the University of West Georgia. She teaches in the area of special education within the Department of Learning and Teaching. Dr. Frazier Trotman Scott's research interests include special education overrepresentation, gifted education underrepresentation, twice exceptional, culturally responsive instruction, family involvement, and the achievement gap. Michelle has written several articles and conducted numerous presentations at professional conferences. She is the coeditor of *Gifted and Advanced Black Students in School: An Anthology of Critical Works* and *Young, Triumphant, and Black: Overcoming the Tyranny of Segregated Minds in Desegregated Schools*. She has also served as the guest coeditor of a professional journal and has reviewed for journals in the gifted, special, and urban education disciplines. She is President of the Council for Exceptional Children–Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners (CEC-DDEL).

Shelagh A. Gallagher, Ph.D., is an internationally recognized expert in gifted education. Prior to her current role as consultant and curriculum writer, she spent 13 years leading the gifted education program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She also worked at Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, one of the nation's premiere high schools for gifted students, where she began her work in PBL. She was also the first manager of the Javits grant that produced the William & Mary PBL science units. She has directed two additional PBL-based Javits grants and is currently serving as a consultant on a fourth. She has received the NAGC Curriculum Award six times for her PBL units. Gallagher has conducted research and published articles on topics including personality attributes and giftedness, gender differences in mathematics performance, questioning for higher order thinking, developmental and academic needs of gifted adolescents, and twice-exceptional students. She is a Fellow at the Institute for Educational Advancement and works with gifted children at the IEA Camp Yunasa each summer. She served two terms on the NAGC Board of Directors and the North Carolina Association for the Gifted (NCAGT). She has received the Distinguished Service Award and the James J. Gallagher Award for Advocacy from NCAGT, the Provost's Award for Teaching Excellence from UNC Charlotte, and the Article of the Year Award from NAGC.

Introduction to Curriculum Design in Gifted Education

M. Katherine Gavin, Ph.D., has more than 25 years experience in mathematics education for gifted students, including her role as math specialist as an associate professor at the Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development at the University of Connecticut. Her career also includes work as a mathematics teacher, department chair, and district coordinator. The main focus of her research is the development and evaluation of advanced math curriculum for elementary students. Dr. Gavin received the 2006 National Association for Gifted Children Early Leader award and the 2012 Neag School of Education Distinguished Researcher Award from the University of Connecticut. She has published more than 100 articles, book chapters, and curriculum materials on mathematics education with a focus on gifted students. She works with teachers nationally and internationally who are interested in developing mathematical thinking and talent in their students.

Alissa P. Griffith is the Lecturing Fellow in the Program in Education at Duke University where she provides mentoring and supervision support to teachers enrolled in Duke's academically/intellectually gifted licensure program. She also supports service-learning experiences for teachers and undergraduate students as a liaison between the University and Durham Public Schools. Prior to her current position, Griffith was a public school teacher and AIG specialist. She also served as a liaison for a federal grant focusing on positive behavior support. Griffith has presented at local, state, and national conferences on the effectiveness of service-learning as a pedagogy for gifted students. She is a member of National Association for Gifted Children and is secretary for the North Carolina Association for the Gifted and Talented.

Jessica A. Hockett, Ph.D., is an education consultant and ASCD Faculty Member specializing in differentiation instruction, curriculum and performance task design, and gifted education. For the past 10 years, she has worked with teachers and leaders in nearly 70 school districts to improve teacher and student learning. Jessica has published a variety of articles, book chapters, and staff development materials, including *Exam Schools: Inside America's Most Selective Public High Schools*, coauthored with Chester E. Finn, Jr., and *Differentiated Instruction in Middle and High School: Strategies That Engage All Learners* with Kristina Doubet. Prior to doctoral studies at the University of Virginia, she was a secondary teacher in both general and gifted program settings.

Angela M. Housand, Ph.D., is an associate professor and the Academically and Intellectually Gifted Program Coordinator at the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW). As a former teacher,

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About the Authors

Housand brings an applied focus to her instructional programs for in-service and pre-service teachers and to her research efforts that test the effectiveness of the FutureCasting® digital life skills framework. Over the years, her work has been presented internationally and published in the *Journal of Advanced Academics*, *Gifted Child Quarterly*, and *High Ability Studies*, just to name a few. In addition to teaching and research, Dr. Housand serves in elected positions for the National Association for Gifted Children and as a reviewer for multiple research journals. The goal of her work is to support teachers as they challenge students to achieve advanced levels of performance while becoming productive citizens in a global society.

Brian C. Housand, Ph.D., is an associate professor and co-coordinator of the Academically and Intellectually Gifted program at East Carolina University. Housand earned a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology at the University of Connecticut with an emphasis in both gifted education and instructional technology. Housand frequently presents and works as an educational consultant on the integration of technology and enrichment into the curriculum. He is currently researching ways in which technology can enhance the learning environment and is striving to define creative-productive giftedness in a digital age.

Susan K. Johnsen, Ph.D., is a professor in the Department of Educational Psychology at Baylor University where she directs the Ph.D. program and programs related to gifted and talented education. She is editor-in-chief of *Gifted Child Today* and author of more than 250 articles, monographs, technical reports, chapters, and books related to gifted education. She has written three tests used in identifying gifted students: *Test of Mathematical Abilities for Gifted Students* (TOMAGS), *Test of Nonverbal Intelligence* (TONI-4), and *Screening Assessment Gifted Students* (SAGES-2). She is a reviewer and auditor of programs in gifted education for the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, and is past chair of the Knowledge and Skills Subcommittee of the Council for Exceptional Children and past chair of the NAGC Professional Standards Committee. She has received awards for her work in the field of education, including NAGC's President's Award, CEC's Leadership Award, TAG's Leadership Award, TAGT's President's Award, TAGT's Advocacy Award, and Baylor University's Investigator Award, Teaching Award, and Contributions to the Academic Community.

David Malone, Ph.D., is a professor of the practice in the Program in Education at Duke University. He also serves as the faculty director of

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Introduction to Curriculum Design in Gifted Education

Duke Service-Learning. Malone codeveloped a service-learning/tutoring program that matches about 300 Duke undergraduate students each year with children in Durham Public Schools who need assistance in reading, math, and academic learning strategies. He also teaches courses in educational psychology, literacy, and service-learning.

Michael S. Matthews, Ph.D., is associate professor and Director of the Academically & Intellectually Gifted graduate program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He is coeditor of the *Journal of Advanced Academics* and serves on the Board of Directors of the NAGC. Dr. Matthews also is Chair-Elect of the Special Interest Group—Research on Giftedness, Creativity, and Talent of the American Educational Research Association. His interests include research methods, policy, science learning, motivation and underachievement, parenting, and issues in the education of gifted and advanced learners from diverse backgrounds. Dr. Matthews is the author or editor of five books, more than 30 peer reviewed journal articles, and numerous book chapters in gifted education. He frequently presents at state, national, and international conferences in education. His work has been recognized with the 2010 Early Scholar Award from the NAGC, and the 2012 Pyryt Collaboration Award from the AERA SIG—RoCGT.

Jean Sunde Peterson, Ph.D., professor emerita and former director of school counselor preparation at Purdue University, was a classroom and gifted education teacher for many years and was involved in teacher education prior to graduate work in counseling at the University of Iowa. A licensed mental health counselor with considerable clinical experience with gifted youth and their families, she is a veteran conference presenter and conducts school-based workshops on social and emotional development of high-ability students, academic underachievement, bullying, parenting gifted children and adolescents, cultural values as related to identification of and programming for gifted youth, and prevention-oriented affective curriculum—most of these related to her practice-oriented research. She is author of *Gifted at Risk: Poetic Profiles* and *The Essential Guide to Talking With Gifted Teens* and is coeditor of *Models of Counseling Gifted Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults*, along with more than 100 journal articles, books, and invited chapters. She is a former chair of the Counseling and Guidance Network and also served two terms on the National Association for Gifted Children's Board of Directors.

Ann Robinson, Ph.D., is professor of educational psychology and founding director of the Jodie Mahony Center for Gifted Education at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. She is past president of the National



About the Authors

Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), a former editor of the *Gifted Child Quarterly*, and has been honored by NAGC as Early Scholar, Early Leader, Distinguished Scholar, and for Distinguished Service to the association. To date, Robinson has generated more than \$24 million dollars in external funding, including five Jacob K. Javits projects. Her interests include the use of biography in the curriculum, biographical research methods in gifted education, school intervention studies, evidence-based practices, and teacher preparation and professional development. She is the lead author of the best-selling *Best Practices in Gifted Education: An Evidence-Based Guide*. Her most recent book, coedited with Jennifer Jolly, is *A Century of Contributions to Gifted Education: Illuminating Lives*. Her popular *Blueprints for Biography* guides provide teachers with strategies for differentiating nonfiction reading in a variety of curricular areas for talented students.

Sarah E. Sumners, Ph.D., is an assistant research scientist and interim director of the Torrance Center for Creativity and Talent Development at the University of Georgia. She has led creativity trainings both nationally and internationally, coauthored several book chapters and entries on teaching creativity, has taught graduate courses on teacher education and creativity, and has written several grants to fund research. Dr. Sumners has a wide range of experience in grant writing, teaching, and professional development. She holds an M.Ed. in gifted studies from Mississippi University for Women and a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from Mississippi State University.

Audrey Tabler has taught secondary mathematics in grades 8–12 for more than 24 years and has taught college mathematics for Arkansas Tech University. In 2008, she earned National Board Certification in Early Adolescent Mathematics. During her years as a public school educator, Audrey served gifted students as a classroom teacher, as a coach for both junior high and high school quiz bowl teams, and as a member of the Booneville gifted and talented advisory panel. Audrey is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, pursuing a degree in educational supervision and administration with a coemphasis in gifted education. Audrey served as a member of the Executive Board of Arkansans for Gifted and Talented Education (AGATE). She attends and presents at state, national, and international gifted conferences. A wife and mother, Audrey has helped raise two gifted sons, one of whom attended the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts.