AN ENRICHMENT PROGRAM IN GENERAL SCIENCE FOR GIFTED CHIDREN IN GRADE EIGHT

AN ABSTRACT

PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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MASTER OF SCIENCE

by
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The author chose the subject "An Enrichment Program in General Science For Gifted Children in Grade Eight" for two reasons. First, he is presently engaged in teaching of general science in grade eight. Second, for the past two years he has had four groups of students considered to be above average according to group intelligence scores. In each instance, it was found that the textbook material being used by these classes was not meeting the more advanced needs of these students. The author found it necessary to supplement the basic textbook material with additional material taken from ninth grade general science textbooks and high school physics books. The teacher has felt that by applying the scientific method at progressively higher experiential levels, he has helped to develop creativity in his students. Creativity is one of the fundamental skills that the gifted are to utilize as members of society.

The author has divided his presentation into two sections. The first section defines the word giftedness, and then proposes a group of axioms that may serve the teacher as well as the administrator in determining the basis for giftedness.

Various definitions as given by some of the authorities in the field of education for the gifted are quoted. The writer chose the following definition to be most meaningful. "Giftedness is defined as outstanding creative ability in any one of more of a number of areas of human achievement.[1]" The author concluded that regardless which definition of giftedness one thinks is most fitting, each school will have to define the word giftedness for itself. The definition would probably include such attributes as minimum I. Q. requirements and outstanding ability in leadership, science, mechanics, art, and music.

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[1]San Francisco State College, A Report From a Workshop on the Education of Gifted Chidren, (San Francisco State College Book Store, 1953), p. 16.

The second part of the first section is devoted to a group of axioms that may serve as a guide in formulating a program for the gifted. They are considered as the basic requirements in preparing a program for the gifted.

The second section of the thesis presents a suggested illustration of enrichment content that may be used in an eighth grade general science program. The illustration is based on a unit of work, power, and energy. Much of the material is based om problems in mathematics, experiments, and demonstrations to be used in conjunction with the basic material on the six simple machines.

The author has gained invaluable teaching and learning experience working with these four groups of gifted children. He has been further motivated by writing this thesis dealing with the problem of adequate provisions for the gifted. The author concludes that special provisions must be made for children of exceptional ability <u>because of their exceptional ability</u>. This principle is in harmony with the democratic concept that all educational programs should be adapted to meet the unique needs and abilities of individual students, and that educational opportunities should be provided which enable every citizen to contribute to the common welfare to the full extent of his ability.