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Donna Y. Ford ^a & J. John Harris III ^b

^a Associate Professor, College of Education, The Ohio State University,

^b Professor, College of Education, University of Kentucky,

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A Framework for Infusing Multicultural Curriculum into Gifted Education

*Donna Y. Ford
J. John Harris III*

*Gifted education, like all of education, faces critical issues as the nation becomes increasingly diverse. School districts everywhere are challenged to more effectively meet the needs of their gifted and diverse student population, while maintaining high standards. This dilemma epitomizes the ongoing debate between excellence and equity. In particular, our field struggles with finding solutions to the persistent and pervasive under-representation of minority students in gifted education (Ford, 1996, 1998). And once these students are recruited (i.e., identified and placed), schools are faced with a new set of questions, **How do we serve gifted minority students? What are their needs? What are their interests?***

Donna Y. Ford is Associate Professor, College of Education, The Ohio State University and a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of the *Roeper Review*. **J. John Harris** is Professor, College of Education, the University of Kentucky and a frequent contributor to this journal

In 1996 and 1997, Ford, Grantham, and Harris wrote about the need to bridge the fields of gifted education and multicultural education. We maintained then (as we do now) that both fields offer great promise for meeting the needs of our student population as it is now and will be in the future - diverse. This article is a follow-up to the earlier articles. In this article, we continue the discussion of why gifted education must be multicultural. We also provide a framework and strategies for designing multicultural gifted education curricula. The ideas, strategies, and framework appear in more detail and depth in Ford and Harris (1999).

In writing this article, we have listened to students, specifically Black students, express their concerns about the lack of diversity in the curriculum. As part of a larger study, Ford (1995) interviewed 43 gifted Black students¹ in grades 6 through 9 about their curricular needs and concerns. Specifically, 41% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that *I get tired of learning about White people in class*; 87% agreed or strongly agreed that *I get more interested in school when we learn about Black people*; and all students supported the statement *I want to learn more about Black people in school*.

Most of the Black students indicated that schools have adopted the most basic, simplistic approaches to multicultural education. An 8th grade male implores:

You get tired of learning about the same White people and the same things. We need to broaden our horizons and learn about other people, even other countries. The White people are just trying to advance other White people and leave Blacks behind and ignorant. I feel like being in the class more when I learn about Blacks and my heritage. It gives me encouragement and lets me know that I have rights. Its helps to improve my grades.

Learning about White people doesn't help me know about myself... I'd like to educate my children about my heritage when I get older. I want to feel good about who I am. Why shouldn't I want to learn more about Black people? (see Ford, 1995)

Students' comments reveal their displeasure with and disinterest in the traditional curriculum offered in their schools and gifted programs. From their comments, it is clear that the gifted Black students see their education as lacking in cultural relevance and meaning; for some, even attempts to use multicultural education materials and concepts are superficial. The gifted Black students want more from their educational experiences than is currently offered. Their comments reveal that the students desire an education that is multicultural; they seek self-affirmation and self-understanding from the school and its curriculum. Just as important, the gifted Black students sampled indicated that educational engagement increases when the curriculum is relevant, that is, multicultural.

Our interviews with these students have several implications: the gifted Black students sampled are not being educated to live in a racially and culturally diverse society (and neither are their White classmates); the curricula do not enhance their racial and cultural identities; and, for some gifted Black students, school subjects lack relevance and meaning. These negative attitudes toward school help to explain why Black students, including gifted Black students, are represented disproportionately among underachievers (Ford, 1996). The lack of educational relevance can decrease student motivation and interest in school. Where do we go from here? It seems necessary to re-conceptualize gifted education through a different set of lenses. What follows is a framework for insuring that gifted education is multicultural.

A Multicultural Gifted Education Framework

Dozens of philosophies or perspectives exist regarding the definition of multicultural. Some definitions are exclusive by focusing only on race, ethnicity, or cultural background. Others are inclusive; they focus on not only race, ethnicity and cultural background, but also on gender, socio-economic status (SES), disabilities, sexual orientation, and so forth. While we support an inclusive, comprehensive perspective, we use Black students for most of our examples in this article.

The framework that we have created borrows from the theories of Bloom (1956) and Banks and Banks (1993). We have attempted to intersect or connect what have, heretofore, been parallel models in education. On the one hand, Bloom's work needs little explanation in a gifted education journal, for his

¹ The students were formally identified as gifted by their school districts and were participating in gifted programs. A more complete description of the sample and study is described by Ford (1995)

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work permeates the field Presenting Bloom's model (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) in depth to educators of the gifted is tantamount to teaching basic chess strategies and skills to Bobby Fisher

On the other hand, few publications in gifted education have focused on multicultural education Thus, we present the Banks' model of multicultural education in some depth Banks

and Banks (1993) defined multicultural education as *an educational reform movement designed to change the total educational environment so that students from diverse racial and ethnic groups, both gender groups, exceptional students, and students from each social-class group will experience equal educational opportunities in schools, colleges and universities (p 359)*

APPROACH	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES	STRENGTHS	PROBLEMS
CONTRIBUTIONS	Heroes, cultural components, holidays, and other discrete elements related to ethnic groups are added to the curriculum on special days, occasions, and celebrations	Famous minorities are studied only during certain times	Provides a quick and easy way to put ethnic content into the curriculum Gives ethnic heroes visibility in the curriculum, alongside mainstream heroes Most frequently adopted in schools	Little attention is devoted to the cultures in which the artifacts are embedded Results in a superficial understanding of ethnic cultures Focuses on the lifestyles and artifacts of ethnic groups, reinforces stereotypes and misperceptions Mainstream criteria used to select heroes and cultural elements for inclusion in the curriculum
ADDITIVE	Consists of additions to the content, concepts, themes, and perspectives to the curriculum without changing its structure	Adding books and materials that do not reconceptualize the unit Not giving the students the background knowledge to understand the books or materials Adding a unit on an ethnic group without focusing on the group in other units Leaving the core curriculum intact, but adding an ethnic studies course, as an elective	Makes it possible to add ethnic content into the curriculum without changing its structure Can be implemented within the existing curriculum	Reinforces the idea that ethnic history and culture are not integral parts of the U S mainstream culture Students view ethnic groups from a Eurocentric perspective, Fails to help students understand how the dominant culture and ethnic cultures are interconnected and inter-related Requires little commitment and professional development
TRANSFORMATION	The basic goals, structure, and nature of the curriculum are changed to enable students to view concepts, events, issues, problems, and themes from the perspectives of diverse groups	Units describe the meaning of events, issues, etc , to all groups involved All voices and perspectives are heard Alternative explanations are explored, particularly that of minority groups Teachers target student understanding, respect, and empathy Students explore values (theirs and others) and the impact of values on decisions	Enables students to understand the complex ways in which diverse groups participated in the formation of the U S society and culture Helps reduce racial and ethnic encapsulation Enables diverse groups to see their cultures, ethos, and perspectives in the school curriculum Gives students a balanced view of the nature and development of U S culture and society Helps to empower minority groups	Requires substantial curriculum revision, in-service training, and the identification and development of materials written from the perspectives of diverse groups Staff development for the institutionalization of this approach must be ongoing and substantive
SOCIAL ACTION	Students identify important social problems and issues, gather pertinent data, clarify their values on the issues, make decisions, and take reflective actions to help resolve the issues or problem	Students study prejudice and discrimination in their school and take action to improve race relations Students study the treatment of minority groups and take action to redress inequities	Enables students to improve their thinking, value analysis, decision-making skills, and social-action skills Enables students to improve their data-gathering, social-actions, and problem-solving skills Helps students to develop a sense of political efficacy Helps students to improve their skills in working with diverse groups	Requires a considerable amount of curriculum planning and materials Longer in duration than more traditional teaching units May focus on problems and issues considered controversial Students may be unable to take meaningful actions that contribute to the resolution of some social issues and problems

Figure 1. Four Approaches to Integrating Multicultural Content into the Curriculum. Source: Banks (1993, 1997)

Banks has (1993, 1997) identified four levels of ways to integrate multicultural content into the curriculum (see Figure 1). Like Bloom's model, this one is also hierarchical. In level 1, the *Contributions Approach*, educators focus on heroes, holidays, and discrete elements. This is the most frequently adopted and extensively used approach to multicultural education in the schools. An important characteristic of this approach is that the traditional, ethnocentric curriculum remains unchanged in its basic structure, goals, and salient characteristics. Students are introduced to minority heroes such as Crispus Attucks, Sojourner Truth, and Booker T. Washington. These individuals, however, are usually discussed in relation to White heroes, such as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. Furthermore, individuals who challenged the predominant culture's ideologies, values, and conceptions, and who advocated radical social, political, and economic reform are often ignored in this approach. As a result, Martin Luther King Jr. is more likely to be discussed than Malcolm X; and Booker T. Washington is more likely to be discussed than W.E.B. DuBois. Subsequently, students acquire a distorted or incomplete view of history and reality.

Another characteristic of this rudimentary approach is that cultural traditions, foods, music, and dance may be discussed, but little or no attention is given to their meaning, impact, and significance to minority groups. What is the significance of Kwanzaa to African Americans? Why do Hispanic populations celebrate Cinco de Mayo? Why do different racial groups in the U.S. have their own national anthem? Why is there a need for alternative holidays and celebrations by diverse cultural groups? These questions would not be addressed at this stage. Also, ethnic content is limited primarily to special days, weeks, and months related to minority groups. Students learn little to nothing about the occasion, group, or individuals being celebrated. The Contributions Approach is cosmetic; it provides teachers with a quick, non-threatening way to integrate the curriculum, and teachers themselves can adopt this approach without knowing much about racially and culturally diverse groups. It also reinforces stereotypes about minority groups, while using safe, non-threatening heroes found acceptable to the mainstream.

In the *Additive Approach* (level 2), the content, concepts, themes, and perspectives of minority groups are added to the curriculum without changing its structure. For instance, teachers may add a book, unit, or course to the curriculum that focuses on diverse groups or topics. While the content changes slightly, there is little restructuring of the curriculum relative to purposes and characteristics. Minority students learn little of their own history, and White students learn little of the history and contributions of other racial and cultural groups to American society. For instance, students reading *The House on Mago Street*, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, *The Bluest Eye*, *The Invisible Man*, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, *The Color Purple*, or the *Native Son* lack the concepts, content background, and emotional maturity to understand, appreciate, respect, and cope effectively with the concepts and issues discussed in these books. For instance, students reading about Malcolm X are not required to understand the Black Nationalist Movement; they do not analyze racial identity; and they may not compare the philosophies of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X. Likewise, students fail to discuss events of the 1960s with the current social and cultural conditions. The additive approach fails to help all students view society from diverse perspectives and to understand the ways that the histories of the nation's diverse racial, cultur-

al, ethnic, and religious groups are interconnected (Banks & Banks, 1993, p. 202). In essence, this superficial approach requires little commitment—little time, effort, training, and rethinking of curriculum and instruction.

In the third level, the *Transformational Approach*, two types of changes occur. In one instance, the structure of the curriculum changes to enable students to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspectives of minority groups. This is a fundamental change from the previous levels; one now sees changes in the basic assumptions, goals, nature, and structure of the curriculum. The second fundamental change is that students are provided with the knowledge and skills to better understand the perspectives of minority groups (e.g., empathy). Essentially, students are informed and empowered. According to Banks and Banks (1993, 1995), the curriculum should not focus on the ways that minority groups have contributed to mainstream society and culture; instead, it must focus on how the common U.S. culture and society emerged from a complex synthesis and interaction of the diverse cultural elements that make up the nation. This approach requires extensive curriculum revision, changes in teacher preparation, changes in student thinking, and much time, effort, and commitment.

To illustrate, we will use the topic of slavery. To increase the depth of students' understanding regarding slavery, they must have experiences that promote empathy (not sympathy). For instance, students may participate in a simulation on slavery, and hold in-depth discussions about the rationale for and injustices of slavery from multiple perspectives. Lessons are not presented in which slaves are portrayed as helpless and passive; instead, slaves are depicted as people who took their lives into their own hands through revolts and other forms of resistance. For an assignment, students might be asked to write a journal entry describing the horrendous experiences on slave ships. Students acquire, therefore, the cognitive tools and insights to walk in the shoes of captive people.

In level 4, the *Social Action Approach*, teachers help students to make decisions about important social issues and take action to help solve them. Students are not socialized to accept mainstream ideologies, practices, and institutions. Instead, students feel empowered and are proactive; they are provided with the knowledge, values, and skills necessary to participate in social change. Self-examination becomes central in this approach through value analysis, decision making, problem solving, and social action skills. (Note that these skills are at the higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy). For example, students examine issues surrounding prejudice and discrimination, and they develop strategies and plans to improve race relations. A class assignment might be to develop classroom rules regarding treating others with fairness. While increasing their knowledge about cultural and racial diversity, students acquire an ethic of social justice— their sense of personal independence, social interdependence, personal responsibility, and social responsibility increase interest, as do motivation and learning (Gay, 1993, 1997). This approach is least likely to be adopted by educators, primarily because teachers lack formal training, experience, understanding, and personal knowledge of other racial and cultural groups (e.g., histories, values, beliefs, customs). We must understand that knowledge without action does not improve social and cultural relations.

We created Figure 2 to guide the development of questions, experiences, and products. This figure serves as a guide, a framework for infusing multicultural content into the curriculum. Figure 2 contains definitions or descriptions for each particular level of the matrix. For example, at the knowledge-con-

	Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Contributions	Students are taught and know facts about cultural artifacts, events, groups, and other cultural elements	Students show an understanding of information 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 required to and can create a new product from the information on cultural artifacts, groups, etc	Students are taught to and can evaluate facts and information based on cultural artifacts, groups, etc
Additive	Students are taught and know concepts and themes about cultural groups	Students are taught and can understand 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 asked to and can synthesize important information on cultural concepts and themes	Students are taught to and can critique cultural concepts and themes
Transformation	Students are given information on important cultural elements, groups, etc., 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 examine important cultural concepts and themes from more than one perspective	Students are required to and can create a product based on their new perspective or the perspective of another group	Students are taught to and can evaluate or judge important cultural concepts and themes from different viewpoints (e.g., minority group)
Social Action	Based on information on cultural artifacts, etc., 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 create a plan of action to address a social and cultural issue(s), they seek important social change	Students critique important social and cultural issues, and seek to make national and/or international change

Figure 2. Ford-Harris Matrix of Multicultural Gifted Education: Definition of Categories. Source: Ford and Harris (1999)

	Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Contributions	Name three songs that were popular among slaves	Make an outline of events leading to the Civil War	Create a model of the underground railroad	Examine how stereotypes about minority groups contribute to slavery	Write a story about the contribution of Hispanic Americans to the music industry	Critique the work of a famous American Indian artist
Additive	List three factors that contribute to prejudiced beliefs	After reading a biography about a famous person of color, summarize the racial barriers that the person faced	Find a book or song that discusses the problems of racial prejudice in society	Compare and contrast the writings of W E B DuBois and Booker T Washington on issues of racial discrimination	Write a play about the Spanish Inquisition	Write a paper explaining why you think it is important (or not important) to learn about prejudice
Transformation	Describe how slaves might have felt being held in captivity	Explain why American Indians use folk tales and storytelling as a means of coping with oppression	Read the essay "What America Means to Me" Write a paper showing how members of a minority group might respond to this essay	Predict how our nation would have prospered without slave labor. What other forms of labor could have been used?	Develop a survey regarding students' experiences with prejudice in their school or their community	Assume the identity of a plantation owner or a slave. From that perspective, write a story outlining the differences between your life and the ideal of liberty and justice for all
Social Action	What would you have done during the 17th century to end slavery?	List some ways that the media contribute to our perceptions of minority groups. What can be done to improve how the media portray minorities?	Review 3 to 5 sources on affirmation action, then write and submit an editorial to a newspaper describing your views on this topic	Spend a day (week, etc.) observing and analyzing how minority groups are treated at the mall. Share the results with storeowners	Form a school club whose goal is to create a sense of community and respect in the school building	Examine school policies to see if democratic ideals are present. Write a new school policy and share the findings and recommendations with administration

Figure 3. Applying the Ford-Harris Matrix to the Concept of Social Injustice (e.g., Stereotypes and Prejudice). Source: Ford and Harris (1999)

	Traditional Questions and Activities	Multicultural Questions and Activities
Knowledge	Who was Peter Pan? Who was the main character in the book? What did students have to do to get the part of Peter Pan? What advice did Grace's mother give her?	What comments did the students make to Grace when she asked to play Peter Pan? What does 'stereotype' mean? Give some examples from the book or other situations. What does 'discrimination' mean? Describe how Grace was discriminated against by her classmates.
Comprehension	List a few positive characteristics about Grace that made it possible for her to play Peter Pan. What is the main idea or message of the book?	Why did the children say that Amazing Grace could not play Peter Pan? How are people of color discriminated against?
Application	Write a letter of support to Grace about being persistent. Find another book that focuses on persistence. How is the main character similar to and different from Grace? Find a poem or song that focuses on persistence. Share it with a classmate.	Relate some of the issues facing Grace to another group of people. What group of people still face discrimination? Watch a TV show and see if a minority person is discriminated against in any way.
Analysis	Why do you think Grace was able to achieve her dream of playing Peter Pan (e.g., How important are effort and motivation to success?) If you were Grace, how would you have handled the situation (e.g., students' comments)? Compare Amazing Grace to The Little Engine That Could. What do they have in common? (Venn Diagram) Why is the book called "Amazing" Grace? What does 'amazing' mean and how does Grace fit this description?	Could a Black person play Cinderella? Could a boy play Cinderella? Read "What happens to a Dream Deferred" by Langston Hughes. What is the message of the poem? How does this poem relate to Grace?
Synthesis	Write a story, poem, or song about being persistent. Dedicate it to Grace. Write a letter to Grace; tell Grace why you admire her.	Develop some school or classroom rules that prohibit classmates from discriminating. What would Dr. Martin Luther King have said to Grace about persistence and dreaming? Write a letter from Dr. King to Grace.
Evaluation	In your opinion, is it okay for Grace to play Peter Pan? What did you like or dislike about the book? Evaluate the statement: "Don't judge a book by its cover."	Do you agree with the children who said that Peter Pan had to be a boy? Why? Do you agree that a Black person should not play Peter Pan? Why? Do you think that we should try to decrease stereotypes and discrimination in our classroom and school? Why? Defend your position.

Figure 4. Applying the Ford-Harris Matrix to *Amazing Grace*.

tributions level, students are taught and know facts about cultural artifacts, events, groups, and other cultural elements. At the application-transformation level, students are asked to and can apply their understanding of important concepts and themes from different perspectives. At the synthesis-social action level, students create a plan of action to address a social and/or cultural issue; they seek important social change.

Putting the Framework to Use

Figure 3 applies the matrix using the concept of social injustice. In particular, many of the examples focus on stereotypes and prejudice. For example, at the knowledge-contributions level, students are asked to name three songs that were popular among slaves. At the analysis-transformation level, students are asked to read the essay "What America Means to Me" and to write a paper showing how members of a minority group might respond to the essay. At the synthesis-social action level, students form a school club whose goal is to create a sense of community and respect in the school building.

Two examples with literature as the foundation are used to demonstrate how the Ford-Harris matrix can be used to pro-

mote learning that is both advanced and multicultural. Figures 4 and 5 are based on Figures 2 and 3, but the multicultural levels have been condensed into one column. In Figures 4 and 5, the middle column illustrates traditional questions and learning experiences that might be used by teachers to promote different levels of thinking, but they do not have a multicultural focus. The third column (labeled multicultural) presents questions and learning experiences that are multicultural.

We have chosen to use two books that are fairly familiar to teachers, particularly at the elementary level (*Amazing Grace*, Hoffman, 1991; *Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear*, Namioka, 1992). More extensive K-12 lesson plans and learning experiences appear in Ford and Harris (1999). In *Amazing Grace*, Grace is told by classmates that she cannot play the role of Peter Pan because she is Black and a female. With the support of her mother, Grace is able to overcome these comments and to achieve her dream of playing Peter Pan. In *Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear*, Yang, a Chinese student, has aspirations that differ from those of his parents. He wants to play baseball, while his family wants him to be a musician, which is a family tradition. Yang and his friend struggle to determine how best to let Yang's parents know of his sports interests. Several instances of stereotypes

	Traditional Questions and Activities	Multicultural Questions and Activities
Knowledge	Why did Yang's family move to the U.S.? What does immigrant mean? How many children were in Yang's family? What instrument did Yang's parents' want him to play? What did Yang enjoy doing?	Where is China? What is Yang's race or ethnicity? What groups make up the Asian American population?
Comprehension	List the ways Yang tried to avoid the recital. Describe the plan developed by Yang and Matthew regarding the recital. List characteristics of a good musician, according to Yang's father. What is the main idea of the book? What does the book tell you about the role of effort and interest in success? Which seems to be more important in Yang's case?	What were some Chinese customs mentioned by Yang? What misunderstandings and stereotypes did Yang's classmates have about Yang and his family? List them.
Application	Pretend that you are Yang's friend. Write a letter to his parents or make a phone call about letting Yang pursue his interests. What advice can you give parents about their expectations for children?	Read a newspaper story about China. Hold an imaginary conversation with Yang about making friends at your school. What advice would you give him?
Analysis	Why do Yang's parents want him to play music? Is Yang lazy, as his family says? Why does Yang use deceit to avoid playing at the recital? What would you have done to let your parents know that you did not like playing music? Why are Yang and Matthew drawn to each other?	How comfortable does Yang seem to feel with being Asian and different from the other students? Why did Yang's sister change her name to an Americanized one? Why do some people or groups have a hard time making friends? Why do some people of color feel uncomfortable in schools? What stereotypes, if any, do you have of Asian Americans? How do people develop stereotypes? How can we decrease or eliminate stereotypes? What are the advantages of cross-cultural friendships? Compare and contrast your cultural beliefs and values with those of Yang's family. (Use a Venn diagram)
Synthesis	Develop another plan to convince Yang's parents that he should be allowed to play baseball.	Create classroom or school rules for treating others with respect. What can we/you do to decrease stereotypes against minority groups? Develop a plan for our class.
Evaluation	How do you feel about the expectations and pressures Yang's parents placed on him to play music? Do you agree with the plan developed by Yang and Matthew for the recital? What would you change to improve it? Is the plan realistic?	Do you think Asian American's face stereotypes about playing music? Why? Do you think the book is an accurate portrayal of Chinese families and customs? Why? Which of the stereotypes mentioned in the book seem true? How can we find out if they are true? How does it feel to be the victim of prejudice and stereotypes? Is discrimination ever justifiable? Defend your response.

Figure 5. Applying the Ford-Harris Matrix to *Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear*.

appear in the book from both classmates and adults. Both books address multiple issues, including social injustice, cross-cultural friendships, family relations, aspirations, racial identity, and social action. All of these issues can be addressed using the matrix as a framework.

Amazing Grace. The traditional questions, as presented in Figure 4, do not have a multicultural focus. They center on questions and learning experiences from knowledge to evaluation, but do not focus on multicultural themes. Nor do they use multicultural materials. For example, students are asked to identify Grace's positive characteristics (comprehension), to find a poem that focuses on persistence and to share it (application), and to express their opinion (evaluation). Of course, students might respond to any one of these tasks with a multicultural answer (e.g., Grace is Black, submit a poem by a minority writer), resulting in a multicultural focus. However, it must be noted that the student rather than the teacher would provide this multicultural focus.

The multicultural column in Figure 4 represents deliberate and overt efforts by educators to integrate or diversify the curriculum. Students explore multicultural concepts

and use multicultural materials. For example, students are asked to define stereotype and discrimination (knowledge-additive). They are asked to relate a poem by a minority poet (Langston Hughes) to the book (analysis-additive). Students are also asked to develop school or classroom rules to address social injustices (synthesis-social action), and to express their opinions about social injustices (evaluation-additive).

Yang the Youngest. This book addresses even more issues, most likely because it is for older students. Again, we divided Figure 5 into traditional and multicultural columns, with questions and learning experiences placed accordingly. Because questions and activities resemble those in Figure 4, we forego an explanation of Figure 5.

Summary and Implications

The framework presented in this article does not solve or resolve the numerous challenges inherent in attempting new undertakings. However, it does provide a model for teachers and other educators to integrate central concepts and principles

from both gifted education and general education. The nation is diverse and so must be students' educational experiences if they are to thrive as leaders in the next century.

Several assumptions and principles guided this article. First, students of any age and from any racial group can benefit from multicultural education. Likewise, all students can think at higher levels and in more sophisticated ways. *Amazing Grace* and *Yang the Youngest* were written for students from grades 3 to 6. However, there are many books with similar concepts and topics for younger students (e.g., *The Ugly Duckling*) and older students (e.g., *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*).

A second assumption is that integrating multicultural curriculum into gifted education presents additional opportunities for students to become critical thinkers and responsible citizens, a goal of many schools. Specifically, when curriculum targets the transformation level and social level, students are better prepared to meet these goals.

A third assumption is that effective multicultural education, like gifted education, takes commitment and time. Thus, educators must seek substantive and ongoing preparation in multicultural education. These experiences are available at colleges and universities, in such programs as Black Studies and Urban Education (see Hu-DeHart, 1995). Likewise, such organizations as the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) have conferences and publications to help prepare educators for their work with diverse cultural groups. Finally, several organizations have guidelines for selecting high quality, bias-free curricula (e.g., Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1980).

A fourth assumption is that the works of Bloom and Banks offer opportunities for schools to target excellence and equity,

thereby strengthening our school system's educational programs. Finally, multicultural gifted education is prescriptive - it meets the needs and interests of our diverse students, while also offering important benefits to other students. If the voices of students, in this case, gifted minority students, are valued, we must listen to them, respect them, and address their needs.

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Composing Dialogues to Express Self-Differentiation and Burke's Rhetoric: A Way to Comprehend Multilevel Inner Growth

M. Ann Reed

This essay responds to the fact that many gifted learners choose to compose dialogues to express and enact the self-differentiation that accompanies multilevel inner growth. By discussing the level of consciousness at which dialogue composition begins and by recognizing the characteristics of gifted learners who compose dialogues, the essay also discusses why and how Burke's rhetoric of empathic identification offers them an interpretation practice that meets their educational and emotional needs. The discussion unfolds several questions for further research.

M. Ann Reed is an Instructor for the Graduate Continuing Professional Education Department at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota.

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Gifted learners often choose to compose dialogues to pursue what the ancient philosopher Plato called *dianoia*, meaning the "wholeness of being" realized when one uses rightly the highest moral ideal or vision within one. Lynne Halsted, whom Michael Piechowski (1997) considered both emotionally and spiritually gifted (p.7), shared her strategy of dialogue-making to express self-differentiation.

When you've felt such a deep sense of being different so early on, an inner life develops at a very young age. Sam [a stuffed gorilla] helped me find my own way. My dialogues with him and with myself about being quite sure I was in the wrong place with the wrong family are very memorable to me (Rubin, 1996, p. 73).

Like Halsted, the gifted learners, who either selected or were selected by

their elementary school teachers to attend my writing workshops, almost invariably chose to express the structures of poetry and narrative through forms of dialogue. Their choices indicated that they were experiencing the self-differentiation, the emergent third-person perspective perceiving the self as subject and object (Dabrowski, 1964, pp.53-64) that accompanies multilevel inner growth (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977) and performing self-differentiation in its most natural and most ancient form. Furthermore, their dialogues not only expressed self-differentiation, but the emergence of a "disposing and directing center" of the personality that "seeks to establish itself at a higher level" of moral development (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977, p.48). Development of this center requires positive maladjustment (Dabrowski, 1967), the capacity to stand for one's ideals and