

Role	Audience	Format	Back to School Topic/Feeling
Pencil	Classroom	Story/Book	Excited & Amused
Chair	Student	Poem	Good & Happy
Pencil Sharpener	Teacher	Comic	Angry & Upset
Slide	Your parent	Letter	Worried & Nervous



Kirsten Spoto

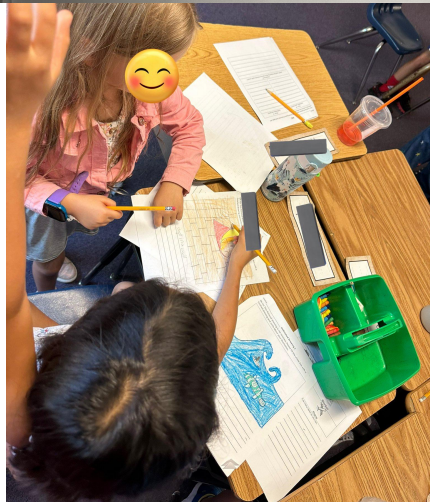
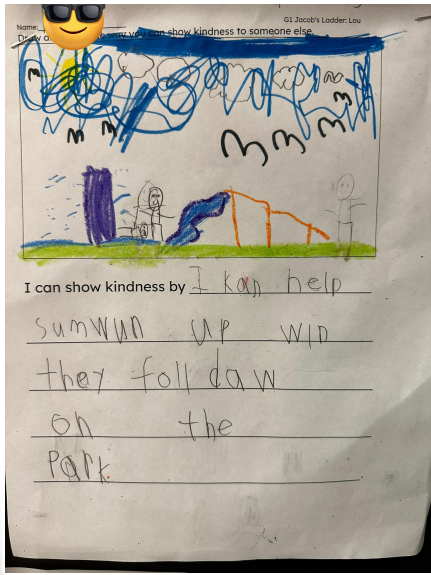
Advanced
Academics Coach
Oakridge
Elementary

October 7, 2025

Dear Ms. Fitz, I am nervous when the kids will come what if they don't treat me well? what if they put my eraser in their mouth and I will need a friend well you are gon to

Pinky,
Pencil!
(Your name)

great letter!



Word, Phrase, Sentence



Word: What is one word that you feel effectively sums up the feelings you have about the school year?

Phrase: Compose a phrase to keep in mind as the year progresses.

Sentence: Compose a sentence to sum up your school year thus far.

MON

TUE

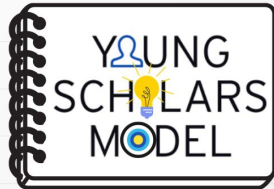
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WKND

Objective



- Provide an overview of advanced academics.

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Virginia Gifted Regulations- APS Local Plan 2022 - 2027:

Virginia Department of Education regulations state that each school district must develop a plan to identify and provide services to those students who have learning needs beyond the regular instructional program.

You can access the
Local Plan here-



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Shared
Responsibility
for Daily
Differentiation
for Advanced/
Gifted
Learners

Cluster Teacher



Differentiation
Monitoring Growth
Use of Resources for Rigor

AAC & School



**Professional
Learning**

**Coaching
&
Collaboration**

**Cluster
Grouping**

District



Commitment to Talent Development & Young Scholars Model

Services & Curriculum

Stakeholder Support

Evaluation of Program Effectiveness

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PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES



Four Key Questions Focus
Us on Learning-

- 1 What is it we expect our students to learn?
- 2 How will we know when they have learned it?
- 3 How will we provide time and support when they don't learn it?
- 4 How will we extend learning when they already know it or learn it quickly?



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AAC ROLE



Increase teachers' capacity to infuse gifted pedagogy in the general education classroom for daily differentiation and increased rigor



Collaborate with teachers to plan and deliver rigorous instruction

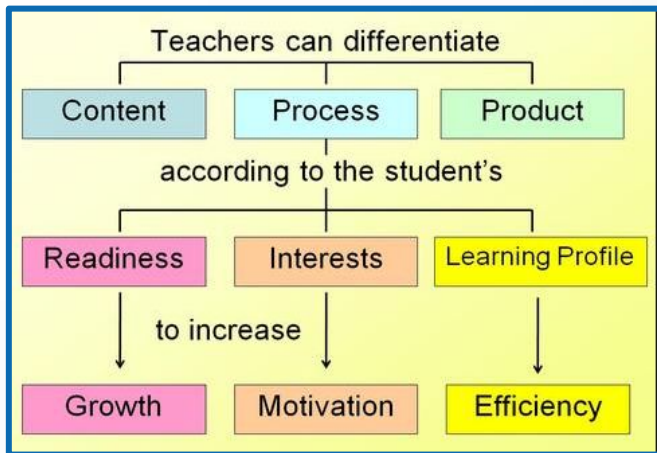


Lead teams in their understanding of diverse characteristics of gifted learners



Facilitate screening and identification process

DIFFERENTIATION



“Differentiation is simply a teacher attending to the learning needs of a particular student or small groups of students, rather than teaching a class as though all individuals in it are basically alike.” -Carol Ann Tomlinson

- Content: What is to be learned
- Process: How students acquire information
- Product: How students demonstrate learning
- Learning Environment: Where and with whom students learn

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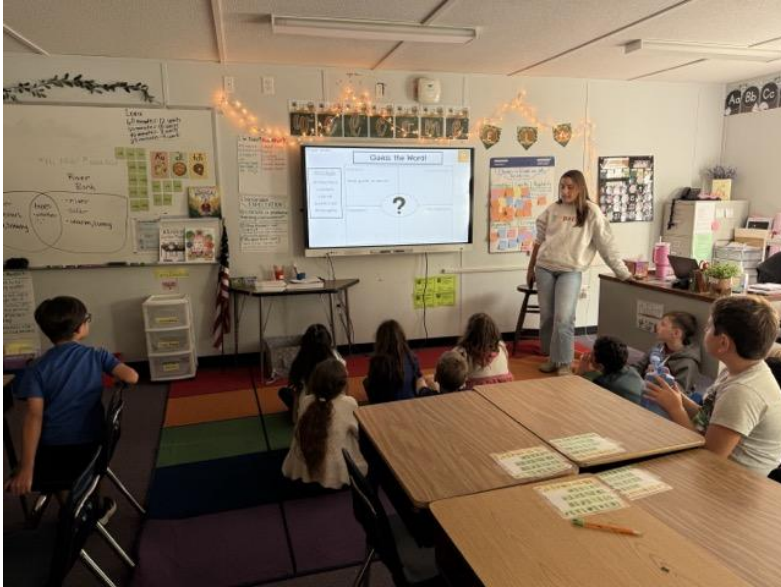
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COLLABORATIVE TEACHING



- **Whole group** team modeling for and/or teaching with classroom teacher
- Supporting **small groups** in classroom, coordinated and co-planned with classroom teacher
- **Flexible grouping**, which may be determined by
 - Needs of students and/or the classroom teacher
 - Difficulty of unit/topic

Critical & Creative Thinking Framework

Name: _____

Date: _____

G4 CKLA Choice Board: Unit 2 Middle Ages Part I

DeBono's Thinking Hats



Consider multiple perspectives when answering these questions about towns in the Middle Ages.

Analogies



Was life in the Middle Ages like a wall, an ocean, a road, or a tree?

F.F.O.E.



Use Fluency, Flexibility, Originality, and Elaboration to design a shield.

RAFT



Complete the RAST as a real estate agent for a Middle Ages property.

PMI

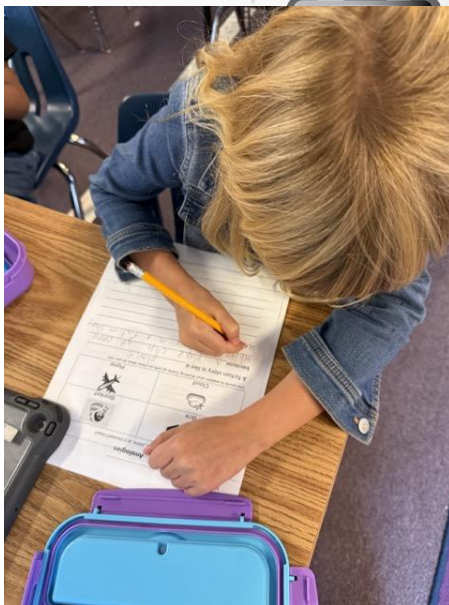


What are the pluses, minuses, and interesting parts about the church's power in the Middle Ages?

Mind Map



Create a mind map about the Middle Ages.



Arlington Public Schools

K-12 Critical and Creative Thinking Models & Strategies

Critical Thinking Teaching Models

- Concept Development Model (Change, Patterns, Systems, Perspective, Cause/Effect)
- Future Problem Solving
- Jacob's Ladder
- Paul's Reasoning Model
- Problem-Based Learning
- Project-Based Learning
- Research Model
- Socratic Seminar
- William and Mary Teaching Models (Vocabulary & Literature Web, Persuasive Writing, Analyzing a Historical Situation)

Creative Thinking Models

- Creative Problem Solving (CPS)
- SCAMPER

Categories of Thinking Strategies

Decisions and Outcomes

- Habits of Mind
- PMI
- Visualization

Making Connections

- Analogies
- Encapsulation
- FFOE (Fluency, Flexibility, Originality, Elaboration)
- Mind-Mapping
- Synectics

Point of View (Different Perspectives)

- Debates
- deBono's Hats
- RAFT
- Socratic Seminar/Junior Great Books
- Structured Academic Controversy

Questioning

- Question Formulation Technique (QFT)
- Levels of Questioning
- Revised Bloom's Taxonomy

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RESOURCES FOR RIGOR

Math

Hands-On Equations
Project M² and Project M³
Project A³: Awesome, Advanced Activities
William and Mary Math Units

Social Studies

William and Mary Social Studies Units
The DBQ Project
Primary Source Documents (Library of Congress)

English Language Arts

William and Mary Literature Units
Jacob's Ladder Resources
Caesar's English Resources
Schoolwide Enrichment
Model-Reading (SEM-R) Framework
Vanderbilt Interdisciplinary Units

Science

JASON Science
Project Clarion Science Units
Vanderbilt Interdisciplinary Units

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CLASSROOM SUPPORT GRADES K-5



- Collaboratively plan and model Critical and Creative Thinking (**CCT**) strategies and **Resources for Rigor** with teachers
- **Build capacity** for teachers to replicate similar strategies and resources in the future
- Working with teachers to find and **nurture historically underrepresented populations** within gifted education (Young Scholars)

B.O.Y. COACHING

1st-5th Introduction to CCT with a choice board in ELA to increase voice & choice

1st: Math Workshop, Project Zero Thinking Routines

3rd: Project M3, differentiating within ELA with Project Zero Thinking Routines

4th: Hands on Equations, Project Zero Thinking Routines, & other differentiation in ELA

5th: Math Workshop, Project A3 & M3, Habits of Mind

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & COACHING

Modeling
Coaching
CLT meetings
1:1 Coaching meetings
Resource professional development

COMMUNICATION

Differentiation Record Form
quarterly report to parents
for identified students in
grades K-5

APAC ACADEMICS
TALENT DEVELOPMENT & YOUNG SCHOLARS MODEL

Q3 DIFFERENTIATION RECORD FORM

G4

ELA
CKLA & Critical and Creative Thinking — In the American Revolution unit, students engaged with APS CCT strategies, Harvard's Project Zero Thinking Routines, and UConn's SEM-R Questions. One Project Zero Thinking Routine was Same, Different, Connect. Engage to encourage productive perspective-taking about a Thomas Jefferson quote from the Declaration of Independence. Another was the 3-2-1 Bridge, where students explored more ideas about the Boston Tea Party and applied figurative language to show understanding creatively.

Math
Envisions Enrichment — Students played collaborative games on current quarter skills during our fractions and decimals units. They solved higher order thinking word problems using multiple strategies.

Science
Oceanography & Botany — Students explored oceans and plants. They engaged in various activities, virtual investigations, and labs to strengthen their understanding and activate background knowledge.

Social Studies
Independent Research — Students studied Virginia during the American Revolution, Westward expansion, and the Civil War. They analyzed key documents, including the Virginia Declaration of Rights, Articles of Confederation, Statutes of Religious Freedom, Constitution, and Declaration of Independence. They engaged in critical thinking through compare-and-contrast, cause-and-effect, and applying the documents to current government documents.

APAC ACADEMICS
TALENT DEVELOPMENT & YOUNG SCHOLARS MODEL

Advanced Academics Differentiation Record Form
Differentiation for 5th Grade Students in the 1st Quarter

Subject Area:	Resources for Rigor	Critical and Creative Thinking Strategies	Thinking Routines	Additional Extensions
Math	IM3: At the Mall with Algebra	Habits of Mind		Groundworks
Description: The Habits of Mind (HOM), a social emotional learning framework, was integrated throughout math workshop instruction. Students applied HOM to strengthen their problem solving strategies in math. Through Groundworks, students were able to extend the				
ELA	Freyer Model	Creative Question Starts: Values, Identities, Actions		CCT Choice Board
Description: Freyer Models, graphic organizers to build students' vocabularies, was integrated with Unit 2: Early American Civilization. Maya, Aztec, and Inca instruction.				
Science	Mind Mapping			Teacher Created Extension: CCT Choice Board
Description: In preparation for their Energy and Matter unit assessments, students created mind maps to literally map the concepts to				
Social Studies				Teacher Created Extension:
Description:				

- Family information sessions & Conferences
- Ongoing collaboration between AAC-classroom-home
- APS & Oakridge AATD Webpage

Word, Phrase, Sentence



Compose a Word, Phrase, or Sentence to capture an important point you've heard thus far.

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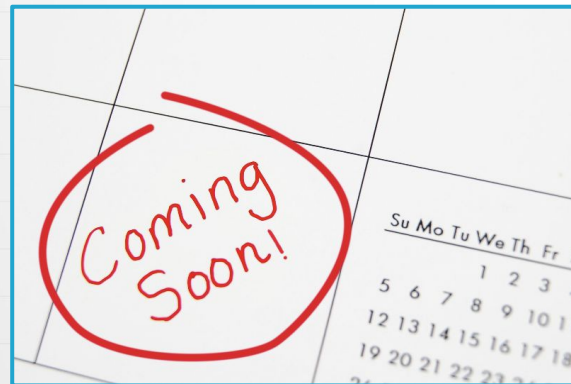
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Screening and Identification Information Session



I will hold a session about the screening and identification process for gifted identification in February.



Screening and Identification Information Session



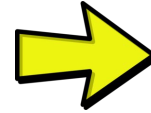
- APS screens entire school population by...
 - Universal Screeners
 - Academic Performance
 - Student Conferences
 - Growth Portfolios
 - Products / Process
- Referrals can be made by teachers, parents, community leaders, and students

Screening and Identification Process

Nomination & Referral



Screening & Assessment



Selection & Placement

School:
Staff observations,
Portfolios

Community:
Parents, coaches,
other

Referral Letters &
Acknowledgment Form

AAC & Teachers gather
and analyze data

Teachers complete the
Gifted Behavior
Commentary

Testing:
CogAT & NNAT
Other

Screening Meetings
with Oakridge panel

Grade level grouping
meetings to
determine gifted
clusters.

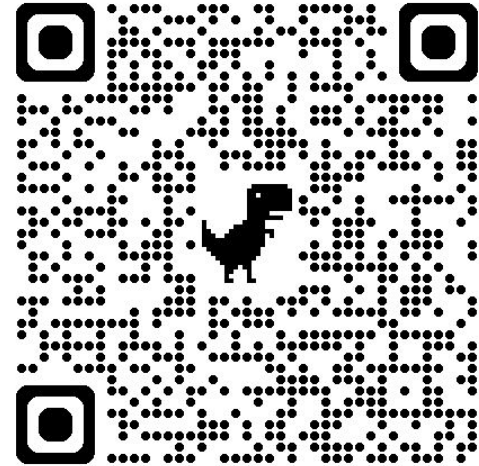
Parent Permission

AATD Screening Timeline

Fall & Winter	Parent Information Meeting Fall - Services, Winter- Identification	AAC
November	Universal Screeners for grades 1 and 2	Testing Coordinator, AAC
Ongoing	Communication to parent Collection of student work	AAC, classroom teachers, specialists
February	Communication to staff on process	AAC
March	Fifth Grade Eligibility & Identification meetings	
February - May	Collection of Data: draft Gifted Behavior Commentary (GBC), work samples	AAC, classroom teachers, specialists
February- May	Collection of Data: testing, parent information forms, letters to parents	AAC
May - June	ID Meetings: Review of data and completions of school GBC	School team: administrator, teacher, AAC, specialists, counselor (etc.)
June - August	Appeals Level 1 and Level 2	Level 1: Principal Level 2: County wide

Referral Form

- APS utilizes a referral form to initiate the screening process for advanced academic services.
- A referral form can be submitted by a teacher, parent, community member and/or a student can self refer.
- This is our documentation to start the screening/identification process.
- For an automatic referral, only a parent permission form is needed.



**Digital Referral Form is
also on the OAkridge AATD
Website**

Getting Connected: APS Advanced Academics



- APS Gifted Services Website



- @aps_advanced_academics



Contact Information

- Kirsten Spoto,
Advanced Academics Coach
- Email:
kirsten.spoto@apsva.us



AATD Office

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Parent Advisory Committee for Advanced Academics

Arlington Public School's
Parent Advocacy Group
Part of Advisory Council on
Teaching and Learning



Meets Monthly from 7:00-8:30

If you are interested in serving
on this committee and/or
attending a meeting, please
contact the AATDAC chair:

Mary Wierzbicki



PARENT RESOURCES

- Virginia Association for the Gifted (VAG)

<http://www.vagifted.org>



- National Association for the Gifted (NAGC)

<http://nagc.org>



- Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG)

<http://sengifted.org>





WHAT
QUESTIONS
MIGHT
YOU HAVE?



Oakridge
AATD



APS AATD

