

# Preface

This book demonstrates the selected outcomes of the collaboration between the Gifted Education Section, Curriculum Development Institute, Education Bureau, and teachers from local, direct subsidy scheme, private primary and secondary schools. We worked together on piloting strategies to differentiate instruction for more able and gifted students in English classrooms from 2009 to 2015. With this book, we aim to provide English Language teachers with suggestions and resources to address the needs of gifted students.

## Background of this Book

Since the holistic review of the school curriculum in the Learning to Learn - The Way Forward in Curriculum Development (CDC, November, 2000), the overarching principle of helping students learn to learn has been guiding teachers to adopt a learner-focused approach through which teachers should understand students' needs, interests, and abilities for instructional decisions. This overarching principle has directed the attention of schools to the emphasis on catering for individual differences, paving the way for differentiated instruction to gain awareness and develop in schools. With increasing awareness of learner differences, the demand for professional development from teachers in tailoring instruction for students, including the gifted, contributed to the establishment of the Gifted Education Teachers Network (English Language) in 2009 with the following as one of its missions:

To pilot strategies and develop exemplary tasks in regular English classrooms and pull-out programmes based on gifted education curriculum models in order to enhance the learning of the gifted through differentiated instruction.

## Aims of this Book

With the concerted efforts of the teachers in the Network, there have been trial lessons conducted to pilot, modify and adapt different differentiated strategies to enhance the learning of more able and gifted students in mixed-ability English classrooms since 2009. Evaluating the tryouts and the piloted materials, we aim to, through this book:

- provide you with adaptable differentiation exemplars, learning and teaching materials and suggestions supported by research and theories in gifted education for use; and
- equip you with the capacity to incorporate theory into practice in mixed-ability classrooms.

This book aims to:

- discuss the characteristics commonly observed in the behaviour of gifted students. You are encouraged to think about the relationship between the needs of gifted students and the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to define our roles as educators and those of our students;
- discuss the myths and realities about differentiated instruction for gifted students in English;
- list the common concerns about differentiated instruction for gifted students and guide you to seek possible solutions using this book;
- recommend road maps with practical steps to pre-assess gifted students and differentiate instruction systematically; and
- detail the exemplars and teaching materials for you to adapt and use.

We welcome your feedback about the activities and resources suggested in this book. Comments and suggestions can be sent to the Chief Curriculum Development Officer, Gifted Education Section, Education Bureau, Rm E328, 3/F, Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre, 19 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong, by e-mail at [gifted@edb.gov.hk](mailto:gifted@edb.gov.hk) or by facsimile on 2490 6858.

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