

Discovering the Talented and Gifted : *Focus on Excellence*

Professor Susan Assouline
The University of Iowa

Gifted Education Lecture Series for
Giftedness Into Flourishing Talents



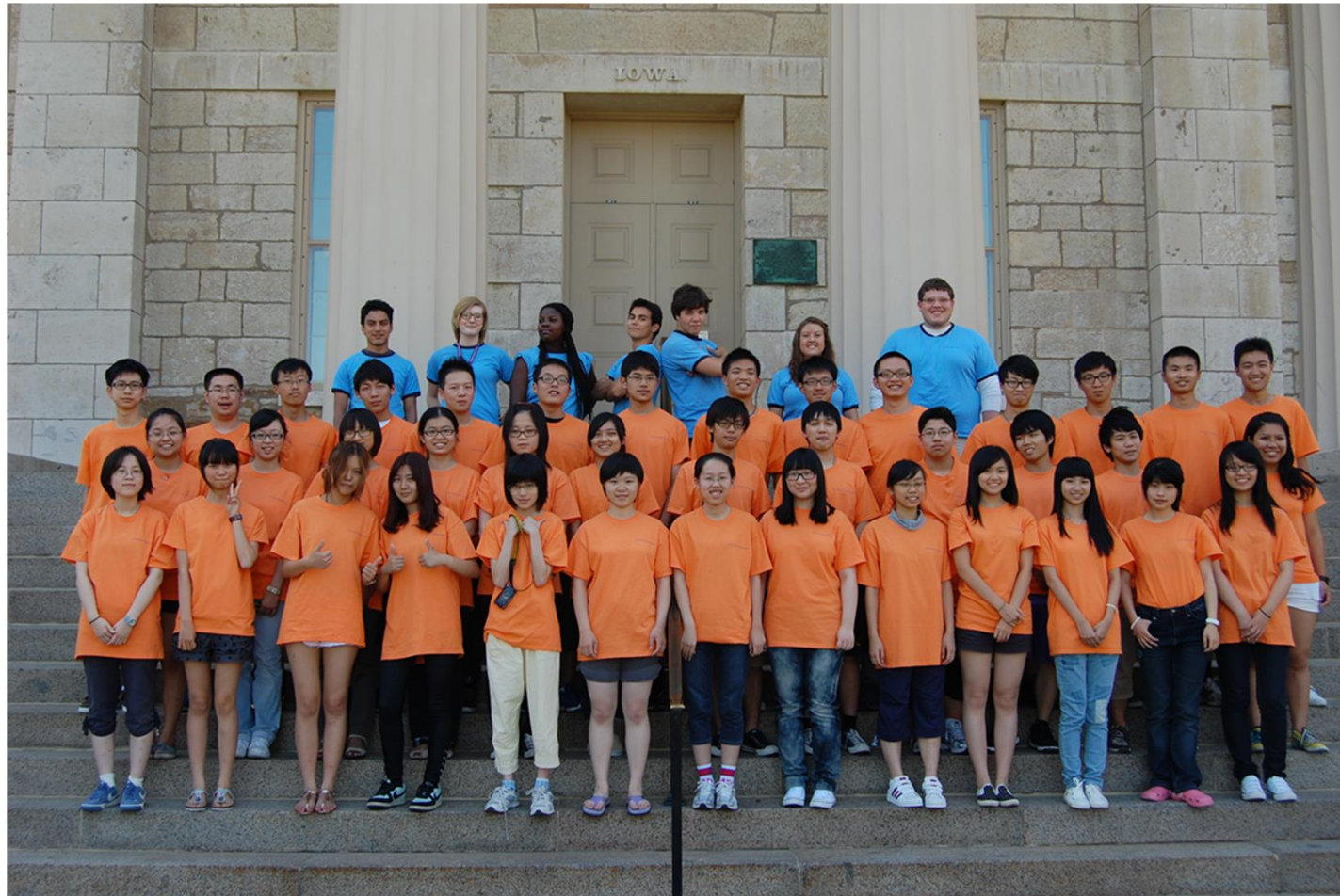
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With Gratitude for the Invitation

*It is an honor to participate in this series with my esteemed colleagues from
the United States,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Polytechnic University of Hong Kong
and National Taiwan Normal University*

*The Belin-Blank Center has partnered for several years with
Program for the Gifted and Talented,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

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School-based Talent Development: U.S.-Based Theoretical Underpinnings



School-based Talent Development

Discovering and/or identifying giftedness and/or talent?

What role does a definition play in identification/programming?

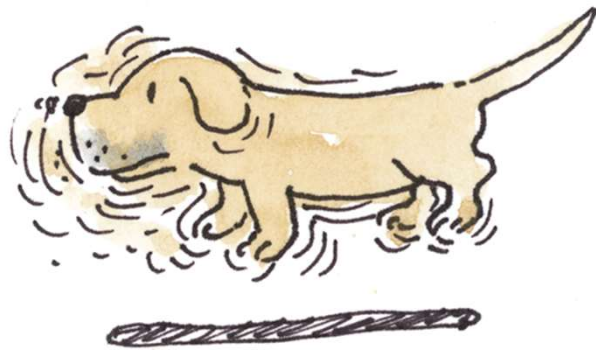
How are identification and programming related?

Which comes first – the definition or the program?

Where does the student fit into this discussion?



Definition ... Identification/ Discovery... Program Intervention



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Which comes first?

Is the dog wagging
the tail or the tail
wagging the dog



Talent development did not begin in U.S.!

Ancient perspectives for finding talent began in ***China*** with the Civil Service Exam.

Developed to correspond to various domains of talent, valued by society at that time.



Revision # 1

- Music
- Writing
- Arithmetic
- Horsemanship
- Ceremonial rites



Revision # 2

- Legal Economics
- Military Strategy
- Agriculture
- Geography
- Moral Standards



School-Based Talent Development: U.S.-Based Theoretical Underpinnings



School-Based Talent Development: Theoretical Underpinnings



The Talent Search Model of Talent Discovery

Professor Julian C. Stanley
Parent, Husband, Friend,
Teacher, and Mentor to
Thousands

Founder of the
TALENT SEARCH MODEL:

- Discover and
- Develop Academic Talent



A scholar and a gentleman



A Voice for Students

Robert Browning: a [person's] reach should exceed his [or her] grasp, or what's a heaven for?

Discovering talent is about saying “yes”

Developing talent begins with the process of discovery

“**Yes**” to challenge and the manifestation of talent developed –

“**Yes**” to Excellence



From Junior High School to College

“I found a junior high student, a 12-year-old helping graduate students with Fortran,” Stanley remembers.

“By January 1969, he was 13 and in the 8th grade. I had him take the SATs cold, and he did extremely well.”

“I tried so hard to find a way to help him. I went to several high-level high schools and asked them to let him take Advanced Placement (AP) courses. They refused.”

That boy was stuck with whatever local schools would agree to do. And that left one option—college.



And today . . .

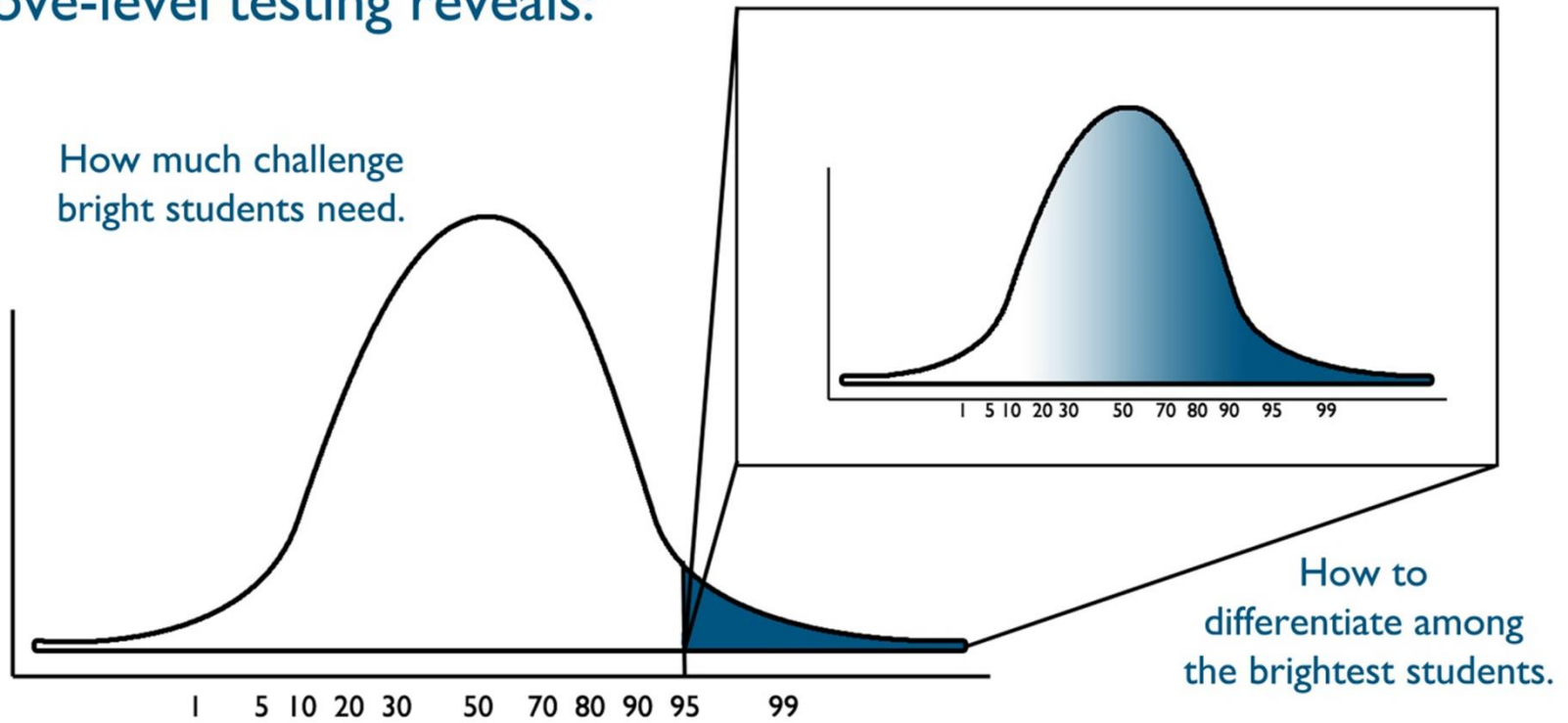
That “boy” is now the chronological contemporary with many teachers and professors.

More than 40 years after he was first “discovered” he [quietly and shyly] describes that situation, and you hear the past ache in his voice.

He talked about the **abyss** and **despair** of being in an academic environment where there is no challenge.



Above-level testing reveals:



What does the research say?

(Effect size = Experimental outcome - Control outcome/
standard deviation)

Talent search – and talent search alone-- has an effect size of .34

One-to-one mentoring has an effect size that ranges from .22 to 2.0!!

Above-level exposure to content has an effect size of 1.9 to 5.9 additional grade equivalents – with improvement in socialization and self-esteem



School-based Talent Development: U.S.-Based Theoretical Underpinnings



Talented Teenagers: The Roots of Success and Failure

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Kevin Rathunde, Samuel Whalen

1. Teachers matter!

Teaching and practicing are two different things – and the domain of talent is a major consideration

Art, Athletics, Music, Science, Math

2. Engagement in talent matters

Talent cannot be developed unless the individual is engaged

3. Teachers can ensure engagement in talent

Teachers who transcend institutional roles in favor of a personal approach are memorable to their students.



Talented Teenagers: The Roots of Success and Failure

4. Grade-level makes a difference in talent development.

5. Gender makes a difference relative to attributions for success.

6. Talent domain makes a difference relative to motivation.

- Educational dose: Professional success in the STEM fields (e.g., STEM PhD, tenure in STEM field) results, in part, from the amount of pre-collegiate opportunities for accelerated and enriched coursework and extracurricular opportunities (Wai, Lubinski, Benbow, & Steiger, 2010).



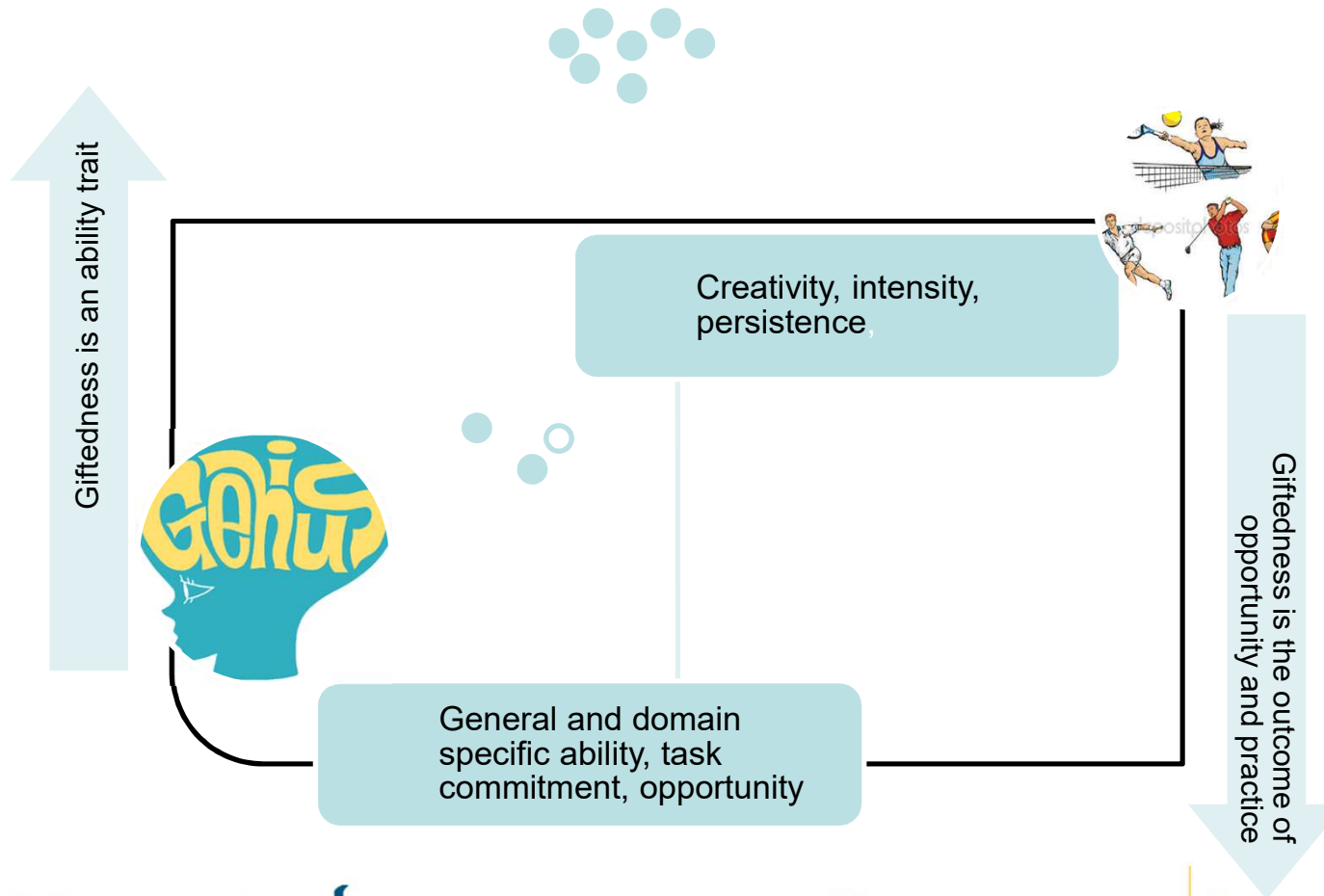
School-Based Talent Development: Theoretical Underpinnings



A new view? Talent Development as a Process

(Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius, & Worrell, 2011)

“Rethinking giftedness and gifted education: A proposed direction forward based on psychological science”
Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 12(1), 3-54



Talent Development: Theoretical Underpinnings



Excellence: 卓越

The root of excellence – from the Greek – is not, properly to surpass others – or to be greater than them, but rather, to rise up naturally, to raise– as a crop is raised.

The oldest root in the word – from the Greek– is that for HILL. Imagine that hill. It was not placed on the landscape to make the prairie feel flat. It was not raised to make the sky tremble. Its job is to be a hill. We do not know why, but we know a hill-less world would be unbearable.

By Jorie Graham,
Former UI Professor of English,
1996 Pulitzer Prize winner for poetry.



谢谢您

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Thank you!

