If You Give a Mouse a Cookie...

Strategies for Responding to Gifted Behaviors

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Session Focus

- Encouraging the demonstration and further development of high-potential behaviors
  - *What can teachers do to promote development of students’ advanced potential?*
- Posing high-level tasks
- Questioning after the question
- Feedback and pressing
Project Goals – Project LIFT

- Exploring student behaviors that may be evidence of advanced academic potential
- Linking instructional practices to the high-potential behaviors students may show
- Infusing strategies to elicit and support high potential into standards-based instruction for all learners
- Considering next instructional steps when students demonstrate high-potential behaviors
6 High Potential Behaviors (FCPS AAP, 2013)

Perceptive and Strategic

- Relate to students’ overall ability to learn
- Include awareness of and sensitivity to the environment
- Relate to degree of focus, independent thinking, and speed/ease of learning and connections
- May be easier to notice with more extensive background knowledge
  BUT the behaviors do not depend on background knowledge
Communicative and Resourceful

- Relate to how students apply knowledge in situations
- Include application and explication of reasoning and problem solving strategies
- Reflect understanding of and ability to apply abstract concepts and symbol systems
- Intersect with ability to learn (perceptive and strategic)

Creative and Curious

- Relate to demonstration of sustained attention to areas of interest
- Include ability to show independence from peers
- Relate to generating new ideas but also to recognizing utility of ideas
- Intersect with application of knowledge and ability to learn through gathering new information and applying it in novel ways
Higher-Level Questioning

Imagine that you are asked to write a chapter on higher-level questioning into a “how-to” book on questioning for new teachers. What sections or topics would you include in the chapter?
Higher-Level Questioning….and then what?

What would you include in your chapter on feedback and follow-up questions?

Figure 3. Percentage of each follow-up function out of total follow-up questions, across all teachers and all conferences.
Prevalent Modes of Classroom Questioning

• IRE/IRF: Initiation, response, evaluation (feedback) – or “triadic dialogue” (Lemke, 1990; Mehan, 1979)
• Tendency for student responses to be brief (Chin, 2006), and for teachers to dominate conversations
• “passive stance towards learning and non-engagement with text” (Wilson & Smetana, 2011, p. 84).
Classifying Questions

• Higher-level and lower-level
• Open-ended and closed-ended
• Recitation versus dialogue (Costa, 2001)
• Reproductive versus productive questions (Tienken, Goldberg, & DiRocco, 2009)
• Critical thinking and creative thinking
• Conceptual, empirical, value (Wragg & Brown, 2001)

Key Project Emphasis

• Placing students in learning situations that encourage demonstration of advanced academic potential
• Encouraging further development of potential based on how students respond
Teacher-Student Moves

Teacher Asks Initial Question → Student Responds to Initial Question → Teacher Responds to Student’s Response
Teacher-Student Moves

Teacher: What do these three shapes have in common?

Student: They are hexagons.

Teacher: 

Dismissal of Student’s Ideas
- Positive
- Negative

Evaluation of Student’s Ideas

Elaboration of Student’s Ideas
- Request for Information
- Request for Thinking/Elaboration

Initial Student Responds
Different Students Respond
Initial Student Responds
Different Students Respond
Teacher's Response to Student's Response

Dismissal of Student's Ideas
- That's right. It has 6 sides and 6 vertices.

Evaluation of Student's Ideas
- That's incorrect.
- What makes them hexagons?

Elaboration of Student's Ideas
- How did you come up with that answer?
- What would you like to add?

Initial Student Responds

Other Students Respond

Initial Student justifies answer by explaining thinking

Other Student interprets, clarifies, or challenges initial answer
Sorting

- Introduce basic shape vocabulary
- Introductory sorting tree

Sorting Tree

- Provides scaffolded instruction
- Encourages higher order thinking skills
- Practice multi-step problem solving skills
What if the digit 4 is the first card drawn?

Where would you put it and why?

What would happen if you put it in another spot?
Sample from the Classroom

• Question: “When I face a challenge, I...”
• Student responses shared and classified
  • Persevere
  • Try your best
• A different response: “I look for it and what it could be”
• What might this show, and what next?

Accountable Talk

• Encouraging students to...
  • interpret and use one another’s statements
  • press one another for clarification and explanation
  • recognize and challenge misconceptions
  • ask for evidence for claims and justification of proposals

(Fisher & Frey, 2007; Michaels, O’Connor, & Resnick, 2008)
Structure of the Question

• Ways of asking for elaboration:
  • “do you agree” versus “what would you like to add”
  • Not just “why” but “how did you come to that answer”
  • “what does that tell us about ____”
• Avoidance of questions that will give one-word or surface answers
• Use of “pressing”
• Rephrasing

Wolf, Crosson, & Resnick, 2005

Supporting Productive Thinking

• Students
  • Need the freedom to respond and express their own ideas (Van Zoest et al., 2016)
  • Consider and develop classmates’ thinking (Lineback, 2015)

• Teacher
  • Allows students’ ideas to determine the direction of the activity (Lineback, 2015)
  • Provides time for sense-making (Van Zoest et al., 2016)
  • Implements structure for students to generalize critical and productive thought