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Glossary of Terms

Ability Grouping	When students of a similar ability or achievement level are placed in a class or group based on observed behavior or performance. Ability grouping is not the same as tracking. Read the NAGC position on ability grouping.
Acceleration	A strategy of progressing through education at rates faster or ages younger than the norm. This can occur through grade skipping or subject acceleration (e.g., a fifth-grade student taking sixth-grade math). View the report <i>A Nation Deceived</i> from the Institute for Research and Policy on Acceleration. Discover guidelines for building an acceleration policy.
Accountability	Holding students, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel responsible for instructional outcomes. Read NAGC's position statement on accountability for gifted student learning.
Achievement Tests	Tests designed to measure what students have already learned, mostly in specific content areas. An example of an achievement test is the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS).
Advanced Placement (AP)	A program developed by the College Board where high schools offer courses that meet criteria established by institutions of higher education. In many instances, college credit may be earned with the successful completion of an AP exam in specific content areas (as this credit varies between colleges and universities, it is suggested that questions about this process be forwarded to the college or university of the student's choice). The Pre-AP program is offered to younger students as preparation for the upper-level courses. Offering AP courses is not equivalent to offering a gifted program.
Affective Curriculum	Curriculum that focuses on person/social awareness and adjustment, and includes the study of values, attitudes, and self. Sometimes referred to as social-emotional curriculum. Visit Supporting Emotional Needs for the Gifted.
Aptitude	An inclination to excel in the performance of a certain skill.
Aptitude Test	A test predicting a student's future performance in a particular domain. One such test is the SAT Test. View more information on testing.
Asynchrony	A term used to describe disparate rates of intellectual, emotional, and physical rates of growth or development often displayed by gifted children. Find more information here.
At-Risk	A term used to describe students whose economic, physical, emotional, or academic needs go unmet or serve as barriers to talent recognition or development, thus putting them in danger of underachieving or dropping out. Read more information.
Authentic Assessment	Evaluating student learning through the use of student portfolios, performance, or observations in place of or in conjunction with more traditional measures of performance such as tests and written assignments. The process allows students to be evaluated using assessments that more closely resemble real-world tasks. Read NAGC position statement

	<p>on assessment. Visit these links for more information on authentic and performance-based assessments.</p>
Bloom's Taxonomy	<p>Developed in 1956 by Benjamin Bloom, the taxonomy is often used to develop curriculum for gifted children. There are six levels within the taxonomy that move from basic to high levels of thinking. The original levels included knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The taxonomy was later updated to reflect 21st-century skills, with the levels changing to remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating.</p>
Brainstorming	<p>Brainstorming is an activity used to generate many creative ideas that have no right or wrong answers and are accepted without criticism. Effective brainstorming is characterized by fluency and flexibility of thought.</p>
Cluster Grouping	<p>A grouping assignment for gifted students in the regular heterogeneous classroom. Typically, five or six gifted students with similar needs, abilities, or interests are "clustered" in the same classroom, which allows the teacher to more efficiently differentiate assignments for a group of advanced learners rather than just one or two students. View more information.</p>
Common Core State Standards (CCSS)	<p>A set of academic standards in mathematics and English language arts/literacy (ELA) proposed in 2013 that outline what a student should know and be able to do at the end of each grade. The standards place emphasis on helping students obtain skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college and careers. View the NAGC position statement on the CCSS. View a list of FAQs about the Common Core State Standards and gifted education.</p>
Concurrent or Dual Enrollment	<p>Most often refers to high school students taking college courses, often for college credit. Dual enrollment is viewed as providing high school students benefits such as greater access to a wider range of rigorous academic and technical courses, savings in time and money on a college degree, promoting efficiency of learning, and enhancing admission to and retention in college. The terms may also be used to refer to middle grade students taking high school courses and earning credit toward graduation.</p>
Creativity	<p>The process of developing new, uncommon, or unique ideas. The federal definition of giftedness identifies creativity as a specific component of giftedness.</p>
Criterion-Referenced Testing	<p>An assessment that compares a student's test performance to his or her mastery of a body of knowledge or specific skill rather than relating scores to the performance of other students.</p>
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students (CLD)	<p>Students from diverse backgrounds, including those of black, Hispanic, and Asian descent, those learning English as a second language, and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Often, these students are considered as being underrepresented in gifted programming. Can sometimes be referred to as culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse (CLEd) students. View NAGC position paper on identifying and serving these students.</p>
Curriculum Compacting	<p>An instructional technique that allows teachers to adjust curriculum for students by determining which students already have mastered most or all of the learning outcomes and providing replacement instruction or activities that enable a more challenging and productive use of the student's time. Find more information at the Neag Center for Gifted Education at the University of Connecticut.</p>
Differentiation	<p>Modifying curriculum and instruction according to content, pacing, and/or product to meet unique student needs in the classroom.</p>
Distance Learning	<p>When a student takes a course remotely (most commonly over the Internet) from a school or teacher different from his or her local/home district. These can come in the form of online high schools, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), courses for dual credit through</p>

	universities, or courses offered by Talent Search programs. Visit the Davidson Institute for more information.
English Language Learners	Students who are learning English as an additional language. Special consideration should be taken to identify these students properly for gifted programming. View a manual on identifying and serving this population from the Belin Blank Center.
Enrichment	Activities that add or go beyond the existing curriculum. They may occur in the classroom or in a separate setting such as a pull-out program.
Flexible Grouping	An instructional strategy where students are grouped together to receive appropriately challenging instruction. True flexible grouping permits students to move in and out of various grouping patterns, depending on the course content. Grouping can be determined by ability, size, and/or interest. Read the NAGC position on grouping.
Gifted and Talented Students	The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act defines gifted and talented students as “Students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities.” [Title IX, Part A, Definition 22. (2002)] Many states and districts follow the federal definition. Find out more about how giftedness has been defined in the research
Heterogeneous Grouping	Grouping students by mixed ability or readiness levels. A heterogeneous classroom is one in which a teacher is expected to meet a broad range of student needs or readiness levels. Also referred to as inclusion or inclusive classrooms. Check out the the NAGC position statement on ability grouping.
Homogeneous Grouping	Grouping students by need, ability, or interest. Although variations between students exist in a homogeneous classroom, the intent of this grouping pattern is to restrict the range of student readiness or needs that a teacher must address.
Identification	The process of determining students qualified for gifted or advanced programming, identification most commonly occurs through the use of intelligence or other testing. Many researchers place emphasis on using multiple pathways for identification, adding teacher, parent, or peer nominations or authentic assessments such as portfolios of student work to the process. Find more information here.
Inclusion/Inclusive Classroom	An inclusive classroom contains students of varying ability levels. See heterogenous grouping (above) for more information.
Independent Study	A self-directed learning strategy where the teacher acts as guide or facilitator and the student plays a more active role in designing and managing his or her own learning, often on a topic of special interest to the student.
Individual Education Plan (IEP)	An IEP is a document that delineates special education services for special-needs students. The IEP includes any modifications that are required in the regular classroom and any additional special programs or services. Federal law and the majority of states do not require IEPs for gifted learners.
Intelligence	The ability to learn, reason, and problem solve. Debate revolves around the nature of intelligence as to whether it is an innate quality or something that is developed as a result of interacting with the environment. Many researchers believe that it is a combination of the two.
Intelligence Quotient	A numerical representation of intelligence. IQ is derived from dividing mental age (result from an intelligence test) by the chronological age times 100. Traditionally, an average IQ is considered to be 100.

(IQ)	
International Baccalaureate (IB) Program	A demanding pre-university program that students can complete to earn college credit. IB emphasizes critical thinking and understanding of other cultures or points of view. A diploma is awarded at the completion of the IB program, which allows graduates access to universities worldwide. The IB program now includes Middle Years and Primary Years programs. View article here from the Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development
Learning Styles/Learning Preferences	Preferred way(s) in which individuals interact or process new information across the three domains of learning identified in the taxonomy of education objectives: cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (attitude). An individual's learning preference/learning style is how he or she learns best.
Magnet Schools	A public school program that focuses on a specific learning area such as math, science, technology, or the performing arts. Magnet schools have been established to meet the specific learning needs of the gifted.
Mentor	A community member who shares his or her expertise with a student of similar career or field of study aspirations.
Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)	A set of academic standards in science proposed in 2013 that outlines what a student should know and be able to do at the end of each grade. The standards place emphasis on helping students obtain skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college and careers. Click here for an NAGC position statement on the NGSS . View a list of FAQs about standards and gifted education .
Norm-Referenced Testing	An assessment that compares an individual's results with a large group of individuals who have taken the same assessment (who are referred to as the "norming group"). Examples include the SAT and Iowa Tests of Basic Skills.
Overexcitability	A theory proposed by Kazimierz Dąbrowski, a Polish psychologist, psychiatrist, and physician, that suggests that some individuals have heightened sensitivities, awareness, and intensity in one or more of five areas: psychomotor, sensual, intellectual, imaginal, and emotional.
Portfolios	An alternative or supplement to traditional measures of giftedness, portfolios offer a collection of student work over time that can help to determine achievement and progress. Many of the elements found in portfolios cannot be captured by a standardized test. Find more info here .
Problem-Based Learning (PBL)	A curriculum and instruction model that asks students to solve real-world, complex, or open-ended problems by using research, decision-making, creative and critical thinking, and other 21st-century skills. Learn more in this article in the Center for Talent Development newsletter .
Pull-Out Program	A program that takes a student out of the regular classroom during the school day for special programming.
Response to Intervention (Rtl)	Rtl is a general education method to identifying and serving students with diverse educational needs, particularly those children with disabilities. Read the The Association for the Gifted/ Council for Exceptional Children's description of Rtl and how it can be used .
Rubric	A rubric is a chart composed of criteria for evaluation and levels of fulfillment of those criteria. A rubric allows for standardized evaluation according to specified criteria, making

	grading simpler and more transparent.
Social-Emotional Needs	Gifted and talented students may have affective needs that include heightened or unusual sensitivity to self-awareness, emotions, and expectations of themselves or others, and a sense of justice, moral judgment, or altruism. Counselors working in this area may address issues such as perfectionism, depression, low self-concept, bullying, or underachievement. View the NAGC position paper on social-emotional needs of gifted children.
STEM	An acronym for the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, providing STEM curriculum is encouraged as a way to grow students' interests and potentials in these areas. Some researchers lump the arts (STEAM) into this category of instruction. Find more information here.
Talent Development	Programs, curricula, and services for gifted and talented students that can best meet their needs, promote their achievements in life, and contribute to the enhancement of our society when schools identify students' specific talent strengths and focus educational services on these talents.
Talent Search	A special program that uses out-of-level testing (commonly the SAT or ACT) to identify high-potential students and allow them to participate in a variety of out-of-school activities. These may occur in the form of Saturday or summer courses or distance learning programs. There are four major talent searches in the U.S.: Duke University's Talent Identification Program (TIP) , Northwestern University's Center for Talent Development (CTD) , Johns Hopkins University's Center for Talented Youth (CTY) , and the Center for Bright Kids (formerly Rocky Mountain Talent Search) in Denver, CO .
Telescope	To cover the same amount of materials or activities in less time, thereby allowing more time for enrichment activities and projects that better suit the interests, needs, and readiness levels of gifted students.
Twice-Exceptional	A term used to describe a student who is both gifted and disabled. These students may also be referred to as having dual exceptionalities or as being gifted with learning disabilities (GT/LD). This also applies to students who are gifted with ADHD or gifted with autism. View the NAGC position paper.
Underachieving/ Underachievement	A term used to describe the discrepancy between a student's performance and his or her potential or ability to perform at a much higher level.

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