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During the fall of 2014 I contacted Jay Mathews, reporter for The Washington Post, about reprinting two of his articles on gifted education. Although I was unable to reach an agreement with the Post's reprint department, Mr. Mathews agreed to my including the links for these articles. It is clearly in our best interests to know what critics are saying about the gifted education field. He has been a reporter for the Post for many years, and his articles are based upon high standards of observation, study and analysis. He is an important individual to listen to concerning the rationale for and analysis of gifted education programs. Please read the following articles he wrote in October 2014:

**Why gifted education doesn't make sense** – October 8, 2014

http://wapo.st/1uCeNAL

**How to expand who gets gifted services** – October 21, 2014

http://wapo.st/1IAw2WT

The first article addresses problems of identifying the gifted in the context of Jim Delisle's new book, ***Dumbing Down America: The War on Our Nation's Brightest Young Minds (And What We Can Do to Fight Back)*** – Prufrock Press, 2014. The second article suggests that Joe Renzulli's extensive research on using flexible selection criteria (Schoolwide Enrichment Model) should be more widely used to expand the types of students selected for gifted education programs.

There were many excellent books that appeared in 2014 which discussed American and World history (e.g., World Wars I and II and the Civil War). Examples of new biographies were those about Lincoln, Lee and Madison. In addition, new military biograpies concentrated on Patton and Bradley. One book that has particularly interested American readers is ***Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption*** (Random House Trade Paperback, 2014 ) by Laura Hillenbrand, and also released as a movie in December 2014. This is the inspiring story of Louie Zamperini who served as a B-24 bombardier in the Pacific during World War II. He grew up in Torrance, California where he became known to the local police as a minor thief and juvenile delinquent. But he overcame his criminal tendencies after he was encouraged by his brother and high school principal to become an athlete. He showed great track running talent by winning national and international competitions which landed him a position on the American 1936 Olympics team. This was the notorious Berlin Olympics competition which included the great American track star, Jesse Owens. Although Zamperini did not win a medal, he impressed his fellow athletes and spectators with his outstanding talent. The main focus of this story is how Zamperini survived the crash of his bomber in the Pacific and his subsequent placement in numerous Japanese prisoner of war camps until the war ended in 1945. This is a difficult book to read because of the inhuman camp conditions and torture experienced by Zamperini and fellow inmates. But it is important for gifted middle and high school students to understand some of the life-threatening situations our Greatest Generation experienced both in and out of combat. Fortunately, he survived this ordeal and lived a long and productive life.

The articles in this issue are as follows:
•*Harry Roman* discusses the characteristics of a great school for the gifted.
•*Hanna David* analyzes research on suicides among gifted students.
•*Mary Ellen Sweeney* describes methods of teaching the gifted during her years as a gifted specialist in the Denver Public Schools, and talks about her two new books.
•*Michael Walters* summarizes the main ideas as applied to gifted students in the book, ***Little Women*** (1868-69) by Louisa May Alcott.

***Maurice D. Fisher, Publisher***

## Defining What Characterizes a Great School for the Gifted

**Harry T. Roman**
**Teacher, Author, Inventor & Retired Engineer**

My colleague, publisher and friend, Dr. Maurice Fisher, challenged me to write this article. So I shall not disappoint him, for he has influenced greatly my thoughts about educating the gifted student. We have spent hours of time on the phone and via email discussing this topic; and over the years, my books and articles have touched in depth on the materials you shall read within. In light of what I have written over the last 10 years, and discussed with colleagues, I believe five basic principles should underpin a great school for the gifted. G&T students should:

1) Engage often in team-based problem solving activities;

2) Experience a fully integrated curriculum (STEAM based);

3) Bathe in oral and written skills practice;

4) Understand the relevance of academic subject matter and intellectual processes to the outside world; and,

5) Be facile with math – using it to solve problems and express their thoughts.

**Team-Based Activities**

This is how the work-a-day world operates; employees work in teams. Students do this in colleges as well. It is the fundamental unit of employee activity today. The days of the lone wolf employee are gone. Problem solving in the light of global competitiveness has become more interdisciplinary and multidimensional, necessitating involving more intellectual horsepower and different viewpoints brought to bear. It makes sense to prepare G&T students as early as possible for the world of work, thus involving them in team-based problem solving.

Team-based activities produce learning dividends for gifted pupils on several important levels:

-Learning about the “give and take” of idea generation and compromise;

-Patience and respect in listening to other ideas;

-Working with people who have different views of life;

-Learning essential concepts of leadership;

-Organizing and planning projects and activities;

-Asking tough questions and framing the problem at hand; and,

-Marshalling viewpoints that support good arguments for your ideas.

Often, gifted students have told me how team-based activities changed their outlook, and their opinions of classmates. Several times I heard gifted middle-schoolers say they made new friends; and discovered how very creative their fellow classmates were – something they never would have guessed. They made new friends because of this activity.

Team-based experiences are the best way to deal with unstructured problem solving – pretty much all the problem solving challenges one will encounter on-the-job. Simply solving the problem is not the only objective; but rather solving the problem with a robust solution is what should be the primary goal. This is something I have advocated before, using a 360-degree problem solving paradigm, where the impact of the solution on the various aspects of our culture are addressed and taken into account in a mediated solution like a matrix analysis. In a variety of articles and books, I champion addressing these concerns, i.e., what engineers do when they design within constraints. How does our team's solution impact the following areas for those who will benefit and use the proposed solutions of the problem?

-Economy
-Society
-Technology
-Environment
-Safety
-Legality
-Regulatory
…etc.

Crucial to all this will be how well G&T students learn how to ask questions and can benefit from the next section….the integrated curriculum.

**Fully Integrated Curriculum**

This is the fundamental enabler for empowering G&T students. This characteristic is a show-stopper for getting the most out of young minds, and qualifying as a great school for the gifted. I was liberated in 1965 (junior year of high school) by my inspirational science teacher (and later life-long mentor and friend), who empowered me to think and act across subject areas….forever altering my academic life, and problem-solving process. This incredible man was teaching STEM/STEAM almost 50 years ago.

Unless our gifted students can appreciate how topical subject matter, both hard and soft, relates to each other, they will be at a severe disadvantage to formulate and address the questions they must ask of their problems. Further, the really interesting questions arise where subject matter interfaces – questions that could be typically asked, such as:

-How should we use technology to extend life; even of the aged and chronically ill?
-Should nano-technology be regulated and why?
-Replace fossil fuel use with solar and alternate energy types?
-Allow the ramped-up use of nuclear power?

In light of the list of constraints I presented in the previous section, can you see how the entire spectrum of technical and humanities topics should be used to evaluate such postulations? And there will be tons of tough questions like this for gifted students when they are adults. I could argue that we have problems in various sectors of society today, because decades ago we failed to robustly pursue comprehensive question-asking, or ignored futuristic projections as to where the solutions back then might lead. This is a problem I might add that transcends all political and economic systems.

Shouldn't we strive to integrate the curriculum so that we inspire our gifted students to more comprehensively solve important problems? We need to do this not only at the school level, but seek to do it at the collegiate level where young teachers are preparing for a career in the classroom. It does not matter whether we call such educational paradigms STEM, STEAM, cross-content teaching or school-to-work.

Before my inspirational teacher passed, our last deep discussion concluded with him telling me, "The schools can only change when we are brave enough to change the way we teach teachers." The modern concept of school derived from the atomized world of the factory production line started about 130+ years ago, where people performed only one aspect of a product's manufacture. By the

1980s, the work world had transformed itself so that everyone's job was concerned with the entire product's integrity and quality. Why not make gifted schools to transition to an integrated education?

**Oral and Written Skills**
One of my favorite quotes is:

> ***The principle goal of education in the schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done.***
>
> ***- Jean Piaget***

To be able to sell new ideas and do wonderful new things is wholly dependent upon articulating and presenting them for people to evaluate their worth. Oral and written communication skills are absolutely essential in accomplishing this. I cannot think of two more eternally relevant skills to support education.

Whenever I visit schools from middle grades through college, students ask me to divulge the most important courses I took – usually so they can take them too. My answer has not varied in more than 40 years……writing and speaking, because they taught me how to communicate with people; labs because they taught me how to work with people; and, the humanities because it taught me about the impact of history, the arts and technology upon people. You can imagine the groans I get with this triad of courses – especially among would-be engineers; but it is so important and relevant to a high tech, globally competitive society.

Throughout my four decades of engineering, I can honestly say I never witnessed an engineering career of a peer ruined by technical incompetence, but I have seen quite a few aborted because of poor communication skills. If someone is going to go before the senior management of one's company to ask for money for a project or to propose a new project, the most one can expect is 5-10 minutes of senior management time……that's it. One must be articulate and able to obtain millions of dollars of funding quickly and efficiently. Also consider this. Many times the senior leaders may not even know you; and will likely form lasting opinions of you from this first encounter. You bet oral and written communications are important!

Prepare your G&T students for what awaits them. Bathe them in opportunities to write and speak. This is like playing an instrument – practice, practice, practice. Here are some suggestions for you to consider applying:

-Grade all term papers and special reports in every subject twice – once for technical content and once for grammar (then stand back and await the howls of protest!);
-Have students keep diaries or notebooks of their work – especially when they are working on team-based projects or inventions;
-Speculative writing for fun is to be encouraged because it can also build creativity in students in venues like science fiction, humorous tales, fantasy and perhaps drama (try poetry as well!);
-If your school likes to host plays and such, get the students involved, or have them write and produce their own plays, skits, etc.;
-Hold contests for the best super short story – say 250-500 words;
-Students can write letters to companies asking for information or to discuss something of importance that company is engaged in;
-Why not have students interview their parents or relatives about important events in their lives?;
-Here is a sobering thought….Have each G&T student write their obituary and picture themselves in the future, and what they may be remembered for; and,

-Mock trials and debating are a superb way to practice these important skills.

Any time students can practice oral and written skills is worthwhile. Even ask your gifted students to suggest other ways to do this. Make it fun, because in the long-term view it is. In the grown up world, those who cannot interact well with others will lead a constricted life. Suffuse G&T education with oral and written communication skills.

**Relevance**

No lesson sticks like one that is relevant to the outside world. Why do we have to study this?….the lamentations all you G&T teachers have heard countless times before. Well, here is a challenge to you to show how that subject matter is used in the grown-up world. Dig deep and find connections that will make your students understand and appreciate the relevance of what they are studying.

In the STEM/STEAM world, students understand what engineering is, not necessarily as a career, but as a problem solving process – a discipline that can be used to get at the root of a problem and develop solutions. This paradigm can be used in many different types of problem solving situations. It is supremely relevant.

Do not discount the advantage you have here, with access to parents of students who have interesting careers, outside experts you can invite into the classroom, and school alumni who may want to give back by interacting and mentoring students. Champion special assignments to explore what skills it takes to pursue certain jobs and careers. Tie this into career days at school. Maybe host a career fair where many professionals can display what they do and answer questions about important skills to have when looking for a job. What does a resume tell a prospective employer about the applicant? Take your case to your school PTA and get some volunteers. Write or email parents and alumni…..get the message out for folks to visit the school.

Take the class on interesting trips say backstage at a theater to see what makes those plays so cool and how special effects work. Where does your water supply come from? Visit the water department in town and discuss how water engineers do their job every day as well as the skills they need. Invite panels of experts into your school to discuss how people transitioned from school to work, and what skills turned out to be most valuable. Mix up panels to include folks who are architects, writers, politicians, musicians, etc. Explore how they may have common areas of relevance in what they learned in school.

There are endless opportunities for your G&T students to see the connections between school and the world of work. Study the lives of famous people and what they have said about the relevance of school to their career or profession. Plenty of great information exists out there….for you and your gifted students to dig out and profit by.

**Math Proficiency**

I speak not of math aptitude, SAT scores or the like. I am interested in actually using math to solve problems; nothing of the "given this-find that" philosophy that still permeates math departments. Instead, how can students use math to solve problems in unstructured applications or challenges? Usually, if a student is turned off to math by $4^{th}$ or $5^{th}$ grade, he may likely be lost to the subject forever; and that will close many doors to high-paying STEM/STEAM jobs. Math proficiency and relevance need to be as rigorously pursued, as intensively as I suggested for oral and written communications skills.

Sadly, two of the fun places where math was explored and applied in schools years ago have been virtually eliminated – wood shop and home economics…..ruthlessly rounded up and eliminated as though they were academic pariahs to the beloved path to college which so many schools are proud to acknowledge as their reason for being. Truth be told, math is very visible and applied in the trades by carpenters, plumbers, builders as well as cooks, dress designers, and consumer advisors. Of course it is also visible in technical, medical and health services professionals.

I think we need to introduce and use simple math as much as possible in early grades, and solve all sorts of problems with it; and continue to do this in many of the non-technical subjects as well. Simple representations of histograms, pie charts, bar graphs and such to enhance discussion of historical and geography lessons would be helpful. Visual display or representation of population samples, statistics, and information about the school and students can keep math fresh in G&T minds. You can always invite math professionals into the school to discuss how math is used in business and industry.

Explore how math and music are related: Aren't notes really a fraction…..time intervals to hold a note or sound? Maybe if you love the beat of a song, you will also like the math representation within the song; and there is the timing or speed of a song as well….say 3/4 versus 2/4 time. Math is all over the place in music like string vibrations and frequencies. G&T students should warm to this math-music duality, as many of the gifted students I have encountered play instruments. Here is an arts connection if I ever saw one. What about dance and keeping time that is consistent with the music and math that accompanies it?

Painters use all sorts of geometry principles to correctly proportion their visual representations. Computer generated art is suffused with mathematical computer coding, as are special effects like morphing. The math is often hidden, but it is there. Develop ways for your G&T charges to access it. There is math application in every topical subject. Find it and bring it to light!

**Summing Up**

Go beyond the traditional classroom and bring in relevant examples of how what you do inside your red brick building is applicable in the world of work – for that is where your students are headed – whether they go to college or not. Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, and Bill Gates never went to or finished college, but they sure as hell applied math, used oral and written communications skills, and solved problems in an interdisciplinary and multidimensional manner. That is the key to their successes. Take the time and effort to use your oral and written communication skills to convince your district about what a great school for the gifted ought to be teaching, and those critical thinking processes that should be inculcated. This article sees the challenge from my viewpoint and experience. How do you and your colleagues' see the challenge? What in your minds would constitute a great school for gifted and talented students? Perhaps there ought to be some conferences on this.

***Selected Books by Harry T. Roman from Gifted Education Press***

Invention, Innovation and Creative Thinking in the Gifted Classroom: Activities & Design Challenges for Students in Middle & High School (ISBN 0-910609-65-9). 2014.

STEM to STEAM Education for Gifted Students Using Specific Communication Arts Lessons with Nanotechnology, Solar, Biomass, Robotics, & Other STEM Topics (ISBN 0-910609-63-2), Co-authored with R. E. Myers. 2013.

STEAM Education for Gifted Students! Upper Elementary Through Secondary Levels. Combining Communication and Language Arts with Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (ISBN 0-910609-62-4). 2013.

STEM Robotics in the Gifted Classroom: Meet ROBO-MAN! Upper Elementary through Secondary Levels (ISBN 0-910609-61-6). 2012.

STEM—Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education for Gifted Students: Designing a Powerful Approach to Real-World Problem Solving for Gifted Students in Middle and High School Grades (ISBN 0-910609-60-8). 2011.

Exploring Energy & Alternative Energy Technologies and Issues: Resource Guide for the Gifted Middle and High School Classroom (ISBN 0-910609-37-3). 2010.

Energizing Your Gifted Students' Creative Thinking & Imagination: Using Design Principles, Team Activities, and Invention Strategies: A Complete Lesson Guide for Upper Elementary and Middle School Levels (ISBN 0-910609-57-8). 2009.

Solar Power, Fuel Cells, Wind Power and Other Important Environmental Studies for Upper Elementary and Middle School Gifted Students and Their Teachers: A Technology, Problem-Solving and Invention Guide (ISBN 0-910609-54-3). 2008.

# Suicide Threats and Suicide Attempts among the Gifted

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**Abstract**

This article will examine the potential connection between giftedness and suicidal attempts or death thoughts among children. At the first stage I will present the findings from the research literature about concepts of death and suicide in gifted and non-gifted children. Afterwards, I will summarize the literature about suicide among gifted children. Finally, a list of characteristics of giftedness that might be risk factors and require the attention of parents and therapists of young gifted children will be presented.

**Introduction**

Many mental health professionals meet, during their years of practice, children who talk about death and suicide, or even try to commit suicide. It is not rare that parents report about death wishes expressed by their child, such as "I do not wish to live"; or "I feel there is nothing to live for." In other cases such expressions are not as clear: "I do not feel good about myself"; "maybe it is better if I am not here" or "perhaps it is going to be easier/better for you if I had not been living at all." Such expressions made by a child at any age are quite shocking. They frighten the parents especially when said by young children. My long experience as a counselor of gifted children and their families has led me to the conclusion that death and suicide ideas expressed by children are one of the most common reasons for seeking counseling even among parents of very young children.

This article will examine the connections between giftedness and suicide attempts or death ideation among children. I will present findings from the relevant research literature about the death concept children have in order to examine whether there are differences between gifted and non-gifted children regarding this issue. The next stage will be a review of suicide among the gifted, including comparisons between children identified as gifted and non-gifted children. This comparison has not resulted in conclusive findings. Finally, I will supply a list of giftedness characteristics which are potentially direct or indirect risk-factors for death ideation, and thus require the attention of parents and therapists of young children.

**Death Concept among Children**

Understanding the concept of death is not easy for adults, let alone for children. It is quite common for adults to abstain from speaking about death or about terminal diseases, including the denial of their unavoidable end. A study of two age-groups of children, ages 3-4 and 5-6 revealed that the parents found it hard to speak with their children about death (Nguyen & Rosengren, 2004). Another study showed that parents tended to lessen reporting of their children speaking about death (Prinstein & Nock, 2003). It is quite obvious that when children speak about death their parents face difficulties; such difficulties are more complicated to deal with when the age of the children is lower.

Discussion of the death concept of young children is sensitive also among therapists and researchers due to the accepted assumption that understanding this concept is a condition for death ideation and suicide threats of children. Thus, the commonly accepted prejudice that "children do not understand the death concept" (Raviv & Katzenelson, 2003) was the basis for the incorrect concept about the negligible rate of suicide and death ideation among children. Today there is an ongoing debate about this issue, and the question: "What does a child who speaks about death mean" has no unequivocal answer. Many researchers have studied it, such as Jean Piaget in his book, "The child's conception of the world" (1929). Anna Freud, along with her partner, Dorothy Burlingham, dealt with this issue while working with children who had lost their families in World War II (Freud & Burlingham, 1943, 1973). Many others followed them; some of the most notable practitioners and researchers were: Anthony (1939, 1940, 1972); Carey (1985); Cotton & Range (1990); Kenyon (2001); Koocher (1973); Lansdown & Benjamin (1985); Lansdown & Goldman (1988);

Lazar & Torney-Purta, (1991); Nagy (1948); O'Halloran & Altmeier (1996); Safier (1964); Slaughter (2005); Slaughter et al. (1999); Slaughter & Griffiths (2007); Slaughter & Lyons (2002); Speece & Brent (1984, 1996) and Von Hug-Helmuth (1964).

While Anna Freud clamed there was a connection between the "ripeness" of the death concept among children and experiencing tragic or traumatic life events, the professional knowledge accumulated since her time shows that some concepts connected with the death concept cannot be understood by children under a certain age. A much more updated study shows that children ages 3-4 hold more erroneous perceptions about death than children ages 4-6 (Nguyen & Rosengren, 2004). These findings are consistent with Piaget's theory (Piaget, 1929), according to which children perceive the concept of death gradually, and at each stage the perception is consistent with general understanding. Only from age 11 and older, at the formal operations stage, is the child able to perceive a mature concept of death. Concepts that are crucial in order to understand the death concept, such as "time-interval," "pace" or "irreversibility" are not understood by children prior to age 11 (Labrell & Stefaniak, 2011).

Maria Nagy (1959) also described different stages of development in understanding the death concept among children, although she claimed – as Freud did – that this understanding starts at a much earlier age than Piaget predicted. Nagy studied a group of 378 children ages 3-10 living in Budapest before the beginning of World War II. She found that children under the age of 5 did not understand that death was irreversible, but rather perceived it as a magical place or a supernatural phenomenon. Children ages 5-10 personified death, i.e., perceived it as a creature that takes human beings with him, while at the same time started to understand concepts such as finiteness and causativeness. They also understood the pain of loss, asked why death existed and what happened to the body after death. At this age children were sensitive to feelings and thoughts of adults around them and even tried to protect them. Only after age 10, and throughout adolescence, when abstract thinking was already developed, did the children and adolescents understood that death was the end of the body's activities. They understood that death could be caused by inner processes or by external factors. They were also dealing with abstract issues such as what happened after death or the meaning of life.

Thus, the development of the understanding of death among children is based on cognitive development: as cognitive abilities improve, the general understanding of the concept of death improves (Smilansly, 1980). It seems to be more accurate to establish that a mature concept of death appears at the formal operations stage, even when it happens before age 11. Accordingly, Whitty-Rogers et al. (2009), who studied the issue of the inclusion of children with terminal diseases in decisions regarding their treatment, think that in such decisions, the developmental stage of the child and cognitive abilities should be taken into consideration rather than the chronological age.

And indeed, Koocher (1973) found that chronological age predicted the understanding of the death concept among children less accurately that their cognitive developmental age. In the case of gifted children, the fourth stage, according to Piaget, might appear earlier – sometimes even at ages 5-6. Thus gifted children sometimes perceive the concept of death much earlier than non-gifted children.

**Suicide among Children**

Until not a long time ago it was accepted by the mental health community that "children do not commit suicide", or "the suicide problem does not exist before adolescence." For example, in a study conducted in England and Wales during 7 years in the 1960s and the 1970s, there was not even one case of child under 12 who had committed suicide (Shaffer, 1974). The widespread belief at that time was that even if pre-adolescent children might think about suicide, they hardly ever made a suicide attempt. Many studies done since then undermined this assumption, and nowadays it is a common belief that the negligible rates of suicidal attempts reported by parents stem from the tendency to hide such attempts (Prinstein & Nock, 2003; Tikvah & Mei Ami, 2005).

The first study dealing with suicide among 2.5-5 year olds was published in 1984 (Rosenthal & Rosenthal, 1984). Other studies, as well as journal and web articles documented suicide attempts of children (Beam, 2010; David, 2012; Zachariah, 2013), and mentioned the increase in the rate of reported such attempts (Cytryn & McKnew, 1998). A United States study conducted in 2005 found that the third cause of death among 10-14 year olds was suicide (Crepeau-Hobson, 2010). Additional studies found that the

suicide rate of children under 14 was higher than in the general population (Dervic et al., 2008; Dervic et al., 2006). A recent Polish study showed a substantial increase in the suicide attempts of girls and adolescent females under 14 (Höfer et al., 2012).

Many studies have been done in Israel about suicide among children and adolescents. Israel Orbach, the Israeli pioneer in the study of suicide, and one of the most well-known therapists and researchers in this area worldwide, has published many books and articles about this phenomenon, including case studies (e.g. Orbach & Glaubman, 1979a, 1979b; Orbach et al., 1979). His first article about suicide among children was published in 1978 (Orbach, 1978). In 1987 he published the Hebrew version of his important book: ***Children Who Don't Want to Live: Understanding and Treating the Suicidal Child*** (Orbach, 2001 [1987]). The next year it was translated into English (ibid, 1988) and since then it was translated into many more languages and had a large influence on the perception of suicide among children around the world. Orbach's work focused on prediction of suicide. One of his main findings was the connection he found between suicide attempts, as well as suicide threats and thoughts about death among children. In particular, he found that a distorted perception of death – namely, perceiving death as a "way out" when life is considered unbearable, or as a kind of life which is better than one's present life, are risk factors for suicide among children.

Another main risk factor for suicide is depression (Stillion & McDowell, 1996). Depression and suicide are tightly connected, as thoughts about suicide or death, or planning suicide all belong to one of the 9 criteria of a major depression disorder (DSM-IV, 2000). Other risk factors found in various studies include psychiatric disorders, affective disorders and behavioral disorders (Grøholt et al., 1998; Kashani et al., 1998); not living with both biological parents (ibid); anti-social behavior (ibid); a major crisis that might conclude in expulsion from school (ibid); previous suicide attempts (ibid) and a high rate of depression of the child's parents and siblings (ibid). Gender was also found as a risk factor, as the number of suicide attempts among boys was double than among girls (ibid). Shaffer (1974) found that high intelligence was also a risk factor – which is clearly relevant to our study of suicide among the gifted.

**Is Suicide Connected to Giftedness? The Calming Attitude and Its Dangers**

Many studies have been conducted about suicide among the gifted, and the research literature dealing with it is quite rich with case studies (e.g. Cross et al., 1996, 2002; Grobman, 2006; Hyatt, 2010; Jackson & Peterson, 2003) as well as quantitative studies of this phenomenon (e.g. Gust & Cross, 1999; Hyatt & Cross, 2009; Hyatt, 2007).

The conclusions of these studies can be divided into two groups: the "calming" and the "worrying." The first group includes studies that demonstrate that the gifted tend to commit suicide in a similar rate to their non-gifted peers (Baker, 1995; Cross, 2009; Cross et al., 2006; Metha & McWhirter, 1997). How can these findings be explained in the light of mental health practitioners whose experiences are different? How can the common phenomenon of a young, intelligent patient who speaks about self-injury if not already doing that be reconciled with such "non-worrying" statistics? A partial explanation of this contradiction has probably to do with methodological difficulties related to the study of gifted children and adolescents with mental health problems.

Most case studies, and certainly the vast majority of quantitative studies, have been conducted among gifted individuals belonging to upper middle-class families, with a very low rate of disadvantaged children coming from low socio-economic families. In addition: studies of depression and suicidal ideation must deal with the feelings of shame and embarrassment connected with these issues (Jackson, 1995), and take into consideration that gifted children usually have well developed mental mechanisms helping them to hide their situation. This concern is of special importance in studies using questionnaires, when no quantitative methodology and certainly no direct observations are used (Jackson & Peterson, 2003).

In addition, the study by Martin and her colleagues (Martin et al., 2010) pointed at another difficulty of finding potential connections between giftedness and suicide ideation: the criteria for identifying "giftedness" vary from one study to another. When such criteria are not fixed, there is not even one criterion accepted by everyone. As a result, there is no way to come to general conclusions when the comparisons have no validity. For example, in one of the studies Martin et al. (ibid) analyzed, the subjects were students belonging to many groups of gifted students; there were no commonly accepted criteria for being labeled as "gifted." In this case, not only was there no possibility for making a valid comparison between groups, but the variation within each group was too large.

We can conclude that as long as there are no uniform giftedness tests – it is not possible to obtain any significant findings about the connection between giftedness and suicidal ideation.

No wonder there are many worrisome studies about gifted, creative and talented children and adolescents with suicide ideation (e.g. Farrell, 1989; Fleith, 2001; Hayes & Sloat, 1989, 1990; Willings & Arseneault, 1986); more specifically about risk factors that might lead to suicide among the gifted, such as depression and stressful life events (Metha & McWhirter, 1997).

**Characteristics of Giftedness as Risk Factors for Suicide Ideation**

Although no direct connection has been found between giftedness and suicide ideation, some personality characteristics of profoundly gifted adolescents have been perceived as risk factors of depression and other disorders, which are risk factors. These characteristics include: intensity, being introverted, high sensitivity levels and perfectionism.

• **Intensity** (Jackson & Peterson, 2003). Intensity is a complicated, intensified quality of experience attributed to giftedness (Piechowski, 1979; Silverman, 1993). While intensity per se is not a risk factor for suicide, highly intensive children and adolescents are at high risk for developing behavioral disorders (Lerner, 1984).
• **Being introverted** (Silverman, 1992, 1993). The gifted tend to be introverted, which comes along with the need to process – in many cases intellectually – information, data and feelings before presenting them to the outer world. Introverts are a minority among children, and their communication style is not as direct as that of extroverts, which might cause social clumsiness and isolation **(**Dauber & Benbow, 1990)**,** and also lead to depression.
• **High sensitivity levels.** The literature about the high sensitivity levels of the gifted is quite wide (e.g**.** Colangelo & Davis, 2003; Edmunds & Edmunds, 2005; Hébert & Kent, 2000; Mendaglio, 1995; Roedell, 1984; Silverman, 1993). Profoundly gifted children might demonstrate stronger and longer ongoing reactions to stimuli than their peers (Dabrowski, 1964; Mendaglio, 2010, 2012; Rinn et al., 2010; Tieso, 2007). This over-sensitivity is a risk factor exposing gifted children to a variety of disorders (Dabrowski, 1967; Jackson, 1995; Jackson & Peterson, 2003).
• **Tendency to perfectionism.** There is a vast literature about the connection between giftedness and perfectionism (e.g. David, 2009; Greenspon et al., 2000). Data about direct connections between perfectionism and depression is mainly anecdotal (e.g. Delisle, 1986, 1990), but it is also claimed that perfectionism contributes to the exceptional emotional and social challenges of the gifted child (Jackson & Peterson, 2003).

In addition to the personality-related characteristics of gifted children, certain cognitive factors could make them feel as an exception among their peers, and isolated in many cases. Such factors include a need for exactness, high levels of abstract thinking, tendency to use metaphors and symbols, and exceptionally quick understanding (Hollingworth, 1942).

An additional risk factor for suicide ideation is the much higher cognitive age in comparison to the chronological age of the gifted child. In many cases this difference is the source of the gap between cognitive and emotional abilities, typical of the gifted (Landau, 1990), which makes it difficult to deal with depressing feelings. In many cases, as gifted children develop beyond the expectations of their families, peers and teachers, they might feel a lack of inner balance and asynchronicity with their surroundings. Without satisfactory support and availability of a creative channel, this situation can result in feelings such as anxiety or depression (Jackson & Peterson, 2003, p. 177), which put the child at risk of suicidal thoughts or even suicide attempts.

An advanced chronological age might have further consequences, as it has an influence on understanding the death concept and the risk-of-suicide attempts level, as described in the first part of this article. It is possible that in order to estimate risk levels among the gifted, it would be preferable to take into consideration the cognitive rather the chronological age. For example, it is possible that a 10-year old with an IQ of 160 will be at risk for suicide like a non-gifted 16-year old.

**In Summa:** Even if giftedness is not a risk factor of suicide ideation, let along suicide attempts, the situation might be different when the gifted child suffers from emotional difficulties, non-adaptive behavior, social estrangement and/or familial problems. In such – and many more similar cases – special notice should be taken even when the child is very young. In spite of the fact that the rate of

suicide ideation among young children is low, it might be higher among young gifted children, whose cognitive age is much higher than their chronological age. It is the task of parents, educators and mental health professionals to be aware of the fact that a young age is not always a barrier against suicide.

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## Mary Ellen Sweeney: Interview with Maurice Fisher about Her Books and Experiences Teaching Gifted Students in the Denver Public Schools

***What type of work are you doing in the gifted field?***

First, let me thank you Maurice, for the opportunity to share two of my efforts in gifted education to your parent and teacher audience. I was gifted education specialist in the Denver Public Schools in Denver, Colorado for the last 13 years, retiring this past summer. I was assigned to 4 elementary, K-8 and/or middle schools. As a quarter time person my main responsibilities in each school included:

- Cognitive ability, humor and creativity testing for gifted students;
- Academically identifying gifted students grades K-8;
- Advocating for gifted students with the school administration, their classroom teachers and parents around instructional and social emotional developmental needs and issues,
- Writing an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) for gifted students in their strength areas, and
- Attending and providing professional development for gifted practices and resources for classroom teachers, interested administrators and myself.

When time allowed I worked directly with gifted and academically advanced students (upon teacher recommendations) on projects or in small groups, in their classrooms and outside of their classrooms. Direct contact with gifted and advanced students was my favorite role in my duties and responsibilities. An unresolved debate ensues in gifted education about the effectiveness of pulling students out of their classrooms. As a gifted specialist I appreciated any time to build positive, affective relationships with gifted children. The social emotional benefits of time with another adult who cares for their academic and emotional success makes "pull out" worthwhile in my estimation.

***What techniques and methods do you find most effective in teaching the gifted?***

Most school districts state in their mission statements that the needs of all children will be met. That's a tall order. I must give the Denver Public Schools' gifted department accolades here. Led by a parent advocate for 15 years, Barbara Neyrinck led the charge to create more programs and schools for the gifted and highly gifted. Gifted services were provided in all elementary and middle schools on various levels. Several years ago a grant was secured for two secondary gifted education advocates. I believe the Denver Public Schools has evolved to provide more gifted services than other surrounding school districts in the Denver metropolis.

Ultimately, in mainstream schools where gifted students are peppered throughout the student population, a gifted specialist like me works to model and inform the school's administration and classroom teachers with gifted education best practices to challenge all students, including the gifted. Some classroom teachers take gifted students' achievement for granted. Some classroom teachers are put off, or are admittedly unprepared to challenge gifted students. Presently I know of a mother who has withdrawn her second and fourth grade children from an innovative, urban, public elementary school. Her children were not being challenged because of the emphasis on underperforming children. She is presently home-schooling her children.

Now, back to your question about techniques and methods. After identifying gifted and academically advanced students, I set out to survey them through interest and other inventories. I rely on my observation skills, too. I have been an educator for 33 years. I had an early start observing people, because I am from a family of eight children. As I stated before, I like "pull out" time because it allows me the opportunity to become acquainted with my charges. The interaction helps me to know what their interests are and are not. Research supports the benefits for gifted students to be with other gifted students. When we meet I strive to introduce a social emotional or creative activity. I converse with classroom teachers as much as possible to integrate what they are learning in the regular classroom with gifted education efforts. Planning academic activities is difficult because the gifted students come with differing academic strengths. The best practices I engage in with gifted students during our time together include:

- Interest Inventories,
- Pre-assessments,
- Bloom's Taxonomy to mix up (differentiate) modalities, processes and products for the students and myself,
- Projects, projects, projects (with clear and structured directions, expectations, timelines and rubrics)
- Productions (the Shakespeare Festival sponsored by the Denver Public Schools is nearing its 30th year and has won multiple awards)
- Graphic Organizers
- Tiered Tasks
- Extension Menus
- Field trips and cultural experiences outside of the school
- Choice

Parents are the main teachers. Like parents, gifted specialists work to know gifted students to provide them with the appropriate social emotional and academic challenges that will foster their love for learning. Knowing and challenging them are organic and never ending. Gifted specialists are fortunate because we able to continue year after year with the same students, granting our assignments remain the same and students do not leave our schools.

***How can teachers and parents prepare themselves in teaching the gifted? What topics are covered in your book?***

Most classroom teachers are prepared in teacher education with a course section of "Teaching the Exceptional Child" with a minuscule amount of reading, discussing and observing gifted education: traits of gifted children and best practices. Ideally classroom teachers work closely with the gifted education specialist to discuss gifted and advanced students in their classrooms. They seek ways to challenge and enrich gifted students in their areas of strength. Professional development and book studies about differentiation practices have been helpful for classroom teachers who are building their skills for incorporating best practices for gifted students.

If I were a classroom teacher or an interested parent of gifted children, I would ask for a primer on gifted education. A favorite book that I recommend to is:

Winebrenner, Susan (1992). *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom: Strategies and Techniques Every Teacher Can Use to Meet the Academic Needs of the Gifted and Talented.* Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing.

The first edition of this book may be purchased for pennies. A third edition is available now, complete with a CD. Any of her editions will be beneficial for practical examples of best practices and even for understanding the traits of gifted children.

Another gifted specialist and I were fortunate to have experienced SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted) training and offered a workshop for parents at one of my middle schools. The text used for that workshop was invaluable:

Webb, James T., Gore, Janet L., Amend, Edward R., DeVries, Arlene R. (2007). *A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children*. Great Potential Press: Scottsdale, AZ.

Like special education parents, some parents of gifted children are amazing networkers. I suggest that parents and interested teachers attend school district seminars, and state and local conferences about gifted education issues. I also recommend that they organize book studies themselves, if they aren't made available by school districts.

**Why did you write this book?**

The title of my book is:

*Gifted Education Resource Guide* (2014) by Mary Ellen Sweeney & Tamara Bilewski. Denver, CO: Elevated Educational Resources.

This newly released book will save gifted professionals, classroom teachers and parents the gift of time. As a project-minded person, it was in the back of my mind to compile gifted education resources. That task is impossible during the school year with the level of other commitments. Another retiring gifted specialist and I had planned to gather our favorite resources and provide a gifted resource book with no set deadline in mind. With the many activities that surround retiring, summer travel and exercise, the completion of the gifted resource guide was expedited because I broke my leg on June 17th. I used the forced time, sequestered at home to complete the gifted resource guide. Otherwise, we might still be talking about writing and presenting such a guide. A gifted education colleague compared our publication to the Fastbacks published by Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation until 2005. Our 58-page book is a concise, informative booklet on gifted education resources for gifted children in grades K-8.

Over thirty years of gifted education experience culminates in our gifted education resource guide. We compiled and annotated some of their favorite resources for searching parents and beginning gifted teachers and specialists in mind. Included are annotated field-tested, secondary resources, eight sample differentiated lessons and numerous websites. The sampling of applied and suggested resources, websites and sample lessons are for the following areas:

- Identifying and Understanding the Gifted
- Social Emotional Development and Affective Guidance (including a parent guide reference)
- Literacy Efforts: Reading and Writing
- Math
- Science
- Enrichment and Extensions
- Differentiation Theory

I'm including an excerpt from the Science section of our *Gifted Education Resource Guide* as follows:

**Aeronautics**

What fun my gifted students in grades 2 through 5 had immersed in aviation experiments for over a semester of weekly meetings. This high interest interdisciplinary learning from NASA in Science, Math, Language Arts, Fine Arts, Social Studies, Health/Physical Education and Technology Education is free to download from the following site: http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/K-12/aeroact.htm

Students will apply the principles of flight experientially and remember them for the rest of their lives: lift, thrust, weight and drag. I challenge interested parents and teachers to break stereotypes and introduce underrepresented populations to aeronautics. Materials for experimental activities may be purchased for a few dollars at most dollar stores. Step by step instructions will help students apply the principles of flight as they build and execute the following projects:

- Air Engines
- Dunked Napkin
- Paper Bag Mask
- Wind in Your Socks
- Bag Balloons

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Students built airplanes and airports. They collected and mastered new vocabulary words. They especially enjoyed competing in a spelling bee for a spelling champion. For some reason, gifted students like spelling bees! After mastering the principles of flight, students were challenged to create their own flying vehicles. One awe-inspiring culminating activity for us was a field trip to an airplane museum at the former Lowry Air Force Base, "Wings Over the Rockies" in Denver, Colorado. Finally, students organized and presented an exhibit for parents to demonstrate what they had learned in a flight demonstration, showing off their newly invented vehicles. One Mother volunteered to bring cookies and lemonade. The overwhelming turnout for the student-led demonstration and final sharing of projects reflected the students' enthusiasm and interest in the topic of aviation.

The *Gifted Education Resource Guide* is my second book written for gifted students. In 2012 Prufrock Press released another book, *Exploring People & Cultures: Authentic Ethnographic Research in the Classroom*. Brooke Walker, another Gifted Education Specialist is the co-author. I was concerned about the social emotional challenges and behaviors of some gifted children. I taught ethnographic research techniques to teacher education candidates at the University of Colorado-Denver and to employed teachers seeking continuing education credits. Brooke applied ethnographic research to her doctoral dissertation and also brought a wealth of curriculum and instruction knowledge to our collaboration for the book. Ethnographic research was a topic that we both knew well and decided it was definitely research that gifted students could benefit from conducting for a myriad of reasons.

In our ethnography book we provide step-by-step instructions for teachers and/or parents about what ethnographic research is (the study of cultures). Then we explain the basics of ethnographic research with practical tips on how to organize a research notebook. Gathering and practicing data analysis from informal field studies with adult supervision is an included activity.

All parents and teachers working to challenge the gifted will benefit from the practical, interdisciplinary and differentiated examples throughout this book, including:

- Ethnography Interdisciplinary Web
- KWL About Ethnography
- Ethnography Vocabulary Chart
- Interview Techniques and Adding Quotations
- Practicing observation skills and summarizing filed notes
- Data Analysis
- Understanding and Identifying the Elements of Culture
- Products List
- Writing Rubric
- Brainstorming Web
- Browsing Planner
- How to write a strong purpose statement for proposed mini-ethnography
- Rubric for final research report
- Graphic Organizers
- Sorting and Analyzing Collected Data
- Thesis Statement Formation
- Outlining the Final Report
- How to Write a Strong Lead and Ending for the Final Report
- Editing Checklist for Peer Reviewer

Understanding other people and cultures is a life skill and of high interest to gifted students. Like all children, gifted students know what a personal challenge it can be to fit in with new situations and groups: team sports, school programs, summer programs, before and after school activities. By conducting ethnographic research step by step and discussing it with the supervising adult (parent or teacher), gifted students will be prepared with insightfulness and skill development that will help them with the present time and throughout their school, work and social lives. They will be equipped with cultural skills and interpersonal and intrapersonal awareness that will benefit them for a lifetime.

***What goals will teachers and parents accomplish by using your books?***

The *Gifted Education Resource Guide* will give parents and teachers the gift of time and a starting point for practical and tried resources for gifted and advanced students in elementary and middle schools. The books, kits, websites and sample lessons included in this guide are a starting point for interested parties. The resources will be beneficial for classroom teachers, homeschool parents, parents and gifted education specialists who are challenging and enriching gifted students' academic pursuits.

My previously published book (2012), *Exploring People and Cultures: Authentic Ethnographic Research in the Classroom,* was written to engage gifted students for social emotional awareness, and applying interdisciplinary skills to a research methodology. Students will understand how research will aid them to understand human behaviors and the world's inhabitants. As researchers, students pose a guiding question for a study of a subcultural group of their choosing after practicing field observations and analyzing their results. Ethnographic research gives students the skills to identify and describe patterns and themes of the subcultures they are observing and studying. Students will understand the patterns of behaviors of their own subcultural groups and other ethnic groups. Through ethnographic research immersion, students will understand themselves better in the present and the future. They will have the opportunity to discuss bias and field observations throughout the research process.

***Conclusion – What's next?***

Thanks, again, Maurice for this opportunity to share with your parent and teacher audience about several of my resources in gifted education that they may want for themselves or for their gifted children's teachers. The last 13 years of my 33-year career in education have been a privilege because I have been able to learn and work with gifted students of all types. The professional effort to work with gifted students has been challenging, but rewarding. I hope that parents and teachers continue to insist on the appropriate gifted programs and programming.

My next writing activity will be a cookbook of my 93-year-old Mother's favorite recipes. She is known widely for her soup making and for her goulash. That book will be distributed to family members in her honor. My self-publishing company, Elevated Educational Resources will print and distribute the completed cookbook as it has done for the *Gifted Education Resource Guide*.

My next professional writing project, following the cookbook effort, will directly apply my gifted education training. I will present interdisciplinary and differentiated lessons for the study of Ireland. I am a third generation Irish American. I was fortunate to meet my Great Grandmother who emigrated with her family from the Glenamaddy area of Ireland. Due to numerous trips to Ireland and my interest in my heritage, I want to share and present the lessons I have gathered and presented in a book so that students (K-8) may be exposed to the many facets (history, literature, geography, economics) of Ireland. Leprechauns are one part of the rich fiction (or nonfiction) of the Irish. My next book will be titled something like, *Beyond Leprechauns: Irish Interdisciplinary Activities*. That book will be published and marketed through Elevated Educational Resources as well. Students of non-Irish descendants may apply the lessons in the book to a study of their own ethnic heritage.

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# Little Women by Louisa May Alcott (1832-88): An American Novel of Giftedness

**Michael E. Walters**

**Center for the Study of the Humanities in the Schools**

"It takes people a long time to learn the difference between talent and genius, especially ambitious young men and women." (p. 250, Barnes & Noble Classics)

This book is usually depicted as a novel for female teenagers. However, its reputation continues due to its appeal to older adults as well. Louisa May Alcott appears talented upon the first reading of **Little Women** (originally published in 1868-69; see the Barnes & Noble Classics version, 2004), and the gestalt of the reading experience transforms the reader to appreciate the author's genius. The characters of the novel are based upon a family of four gifted and talented girls. Educators of the gifted need to study the book, and should examine the life of Louisa May Alcott.

Gifted women writers are not a mere product of the 21st century. In a seventy year period from 1812 to 1882 there was an outpouring of literary geniuses such as Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, George Eliot, and the Brontë sisters in England; George Sand in France; and Louisa May Alcott and Emily Dickinson in the United States. In the high school that I attended during the 1950s, I read many of the works of these geniuses in my English classes. Does the common core curriculum include a similar lineup of geniuses today?

When studying the home environments of these geniuses, there are similar factors in their backgrounds. Louisa May Alcott provides clear examples of these factors. First, her parents were excellent role models. Mrs. Abigail Alcott was a pioneering social worker. Mr. Amos Bronson Alcott was a famous philosopher, educator and lecturer. Her parents' friends were the icons of New England's Transcendental Movement – Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau and Nathaniel Hawthorne. Louisa resided for a major part of her life in Concord, Massachusetts. She attended the Concord Academy that was operated by Thoreau and his brother, John. Emerson's books became an important part of her personal library. The life style of Louisa and her siblings was a significant component of their giftedness. For example, they published their own newspaper and performed theatrical shows. Music, art, crafts and gardening were a part of their daily routine. They also developed an acute awareness of social issues, e.g., the Abolitionist Movement.

**Little Women** contains, in literary form, the daily lives of the Alcott girls. Louisa and her siblings were extensive travelers to Boston, New York and Europe where they studied architecture, paintings, music and political theories. All four girls were voracious readers and participants in lively discussion groups. In this regard, two novels were included in **Little Women** that were important to the book's structure and narrative — **The Pilgrim's Progress** (1678) by John Bunyan and **The Pickwick Papers** (1837) by Charles Dickens. Alcott's book also describes the works of writers such as John Milton (**Paradise Lost**, 1667) and **Essays** (1612) by Francis Bacon.

The book is very sensitive to issues in our current society. They include economic inequality, immigration, race, war and feminist concerns. **Little Women** and the cinematic interpretations should be a part of the gifted education curriculum. Louisa's writing style is engaging and philosophically relevant for today's gifted students.

"Little they cared what anybody thought, for they were enjoying the happy hour that seldom comes but once in any life, the magical moment which bestows youth on the old, beauty on the plain, wealth on the poor, and gives human hearts a foretaste of heaven." (p. 457, Barnes & Noble Classics)

***Books from Gifted Education Press*** **(Order PDF Copies via PayPal – http://bit.ly/bwObhi)**

**Just Published –** ***Giving a Lift to the Gifted: Ideas and Essays for Helping Teachers Inspire Higher Thinking in the Creative Classroom*** by R.E. Myers (2014). Please see the link at Amazom.com and a picture of the inspiring cover designed for gifted students and their teachers: **http://amzn.to/1lwkfhn.**

***Invention and Innovation for Gifted Students*** **–Brand New – Excellent endorsements for this book by teachers, technology specialists, inventors, STEM experts, and professors: www.GiftedEdPress.com.**

***Invention, Innovation and Creative Thinking in the Gifted Classroom*** **(2014) by Harry T. Roman**

A Unique Book for Teaching Gifted Students How to be Inventors and Innovators – Written by an Inventor and Distinguished Technology Teacher of the Gifted – Harry T. Roman. STRETCH THE INVENTION MENTALITY OF YOUR GIFTED AND ADVANCED STUDENTS! **ORDER THROUGH AMAZON.COM.** http://amzn.to/1cCbMrD

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***Creative Problem Solving –***

**Energizing Your Gifted Students' Creative Thinking & Imagination: Using Design Principles, Team Activities, and Invention Strategies - A Complete Lesson Guide for Upper Elementary and Middle School Levels by Harry T. Roman**
**http://www.giftededpress.com/HARRYTROMANCREATIVITY.htm**

**SNIBBLES$^3$:** ***Serving Up a Steaming Hot Cup of Creative Problem Solving Challenges*** **by Judy Micheletti (BRAND NEW – JUST PUBLISHED!) http://www.giftededpress.com/THIRDSNIBBLESBOOK.htm**

**SNIBBLES: REALLY Creative Problem Solving Lessons and Mind-Stimulating Exercises for Gifted Students and Their Teachers, Ages 5 through Really Old! by Judy Micheletti http://bit.ly/9mCe3C**

**MORE SNIBBLES: Serendipitous Seasons by Judy Micheletti http://www.giftededpress.com/SNIBBLES2.htm**

***STEM/STEAM Education Books –***
**STEM Robotics in the Gifted Classroom: Meet ROBO-MAN! Upper Elementary through Secondary Levels by Harry T. Roman http://bit.ly/GSwhit**
**STEM-Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education for Gifted Students: Designing a Powerful Approach to Real-World Problem Solving for Gifted Students in Middle and High School Grades by Harry T. Roman**
**http://bit.ly/hQIqaO**
**STEAM Education for Gifted Students! Upper Elementary Through Secondary Levels: Combining Communication and Language Arts with Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics by Harry T. Roman**
**http://amzn.to/UJ20Kb**
**STEM to STEAM Education for Gifted Students: Using Specific Communication Arts Lessons with Nanotechnology, Solar, Biomass, Robotics, & Other STEM Topics by Harry T. Roman & Robert E. Myers**
http://bit.ly/143Cm7i

**Please see our STEM Matrix of FIFTEEN Books for the Gifted from Gifted Education Press!**
http://www.giftededpress.com/STEMBOOKSMATRIX.htm **I would appreciate your sharing this link with colleagues in the Gifted, STEM, Technology, Science, Math, Career Education, and Language Arts/English areas. Thank you,**

***Language Arts, Homeschooling*** **– Golden Quills: Creative Thinking and Writing Lessons for Middle-School Gifted Students by Robert E. Myers http://www.giftededpress.com/REMYERS.htm**
**Homeschooling Gifted Students: Stimulating High Levels of Creative Thinking and Problem Solving in the Home: Upper Elementary through Middle School by Robert E. Myers**
**http://www.giftededpress.com/MYERSHOMESCHOOLING.pdf**