



Massey University

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Te Kupenga o Te Mātauranga

Going for Gold: Competitions for Gifted and Talented Students



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Overview

- Competitions
- Potential benefits and challenges of competitions
- A schoolwide approach to planning and implementing competitions
- An array of competitions

Competitions

“Competitions provide opportunities for gifted and talented students to compete or perform, exhibiting their special abilities and talents, and as such, have long been a **cornerstone** of gifted education” (Riley & Karnes, 2006, p. 145).

Competitions

Riley and Karnes (1998/1999) state that for gifted and talented students, competitions put their **talents to the test**, allowing students a chance to showcase their special abilities, and in doing so, receive **recognition and acknowledgement**.

Competitions

“One can create an arena where individuals are allowed to perform some task or set of tasks with those being selected as eligible whose level of performance is judged **superior**, by whatever definition or criteria”
(Campbell, Wagner, and Walberg, 2001, p. 524).

Competitions

- Academic, fine and performing arts, cultural, leadership, athletic
- Local, regional, national, international: school-based to worldwide
- Individual or team approaches: teams of students, long-term independent research projects, and tests to identify exceptional talent

Competitions

“Competitions strive to celebrate, honor, and acknowledge excellence, while concurrently developing potential” (Riley & Karnes, 2006, p. 146).

Assumptions Underlying Competitions

1. Excellence is evidenced in youth and should be developed and celebrated.
2. Excellence is achieved through differentiating content, processes, and products across an array of approaches.
3. Excellence is self-evident and gifted and talented youth are motivated to further develop their potential.
4. Gifted and talented students can set and reach standards of excellence.
5. Gifted and talented students can make contributions of excellence for the betterment and future of today's world.

(Riley & Karnes, 2006, pp. 148-149)

Potential Benefits: Schools

- Creating a culture that recognises and develops excellence
- Raising the public profile of giftedness and talent
- Supplementing a continuum of provisions for gifted and talented students
- Raising awareness of career and educational opportunities for gifted and talented students

Potential Benefits: Schools

- Developing standards of content, process and product excellence
- Determining appropriate identification of gifted and talented students
- Aligning curricular models with competition goals
- Creating appropriate programme goals and objectives for gifted and talented education
- Meeting cognitive, affective and cultural needs of gifted and talented students

Potential Benefits: Students

- Developing performance and personal excellence: participation in and of itself constitutes winning
- Learning to cope with differences, strive toward excellence, accept failure and frustration, and recognise potential
- Experiencing a taste of what lies ahead in the challenges of the everyday world

Riley & Karnes (2006)

Potential Benefits: Students

1. Satisfaction through goal-setting and management
2. Enhancement of self-directed learning skills; sense of autonomy; cooperative team-work skills; content, process, and product development; and personal and interpersonal understandings
3. Opportunities to work with others of similar ability, confidentially exchanging ideas and enjoying new challenges;
4. Learning to set, assess, and recognise standards of excellence (Davis & Rimm, 1998; Riley & Karnes, 1998/1999, 1999).

Potential Benefits: Students

Competitions can serve as a **motivational spark plug**:
short and long-term
(Riley & Karnes, 2006; Cropper, 1998).

Work and study skills can be
enhanced through participation
(Fletcher, 1995).

Competitions can **enhance the interests** of students –
opportunity to build on current interests and formulate
new ones (Riley & Karnes, 2006).

Potential Benefits: Students

realization that
I had potential

first indication
I had of how
good I really was

a more objective
indication of my
talent

confirmation of
my abilities

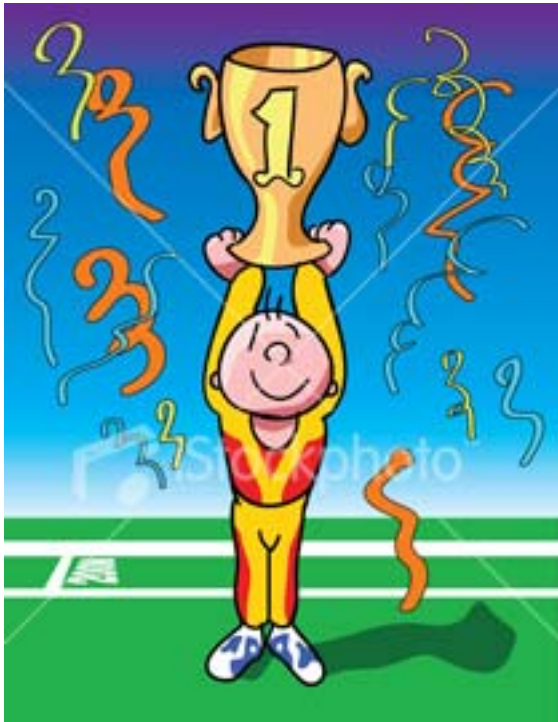
Campbell et al., 2001, p. 533

Potential Benefits: Students

“The very act of being engaged with other competitors, the very **synergy** of that ... summons up the best of everybody”
(Nifong, 1996, p. 13).

Having **fun** is the ultimate prize reported by students who compete – and the fun is all in the learning (Abernathy & Vineyard, 2001).

Potential Benefits: Students



Scholarships
Cash prizes
Trophies, ribbons and
certificates
Travel

Potential Challenges

It is important however, to note that these are all **speculated benefits**: there is a **scarcity of research** related to the effectiveness of competitions in meeting the unique social, emotional, and intellectual needs of gifted and talented students.

Campbell et al. (2001), Rogers (2002),
Olszewski-Kubilius (2003)

Potential Challenges

- Potential negative effects upon students: stress, feelings of failure, perfectionism, underachievement (Cropper, 1998; Davis & Rimm, 1998; Rimm, 1986)
- Hidden costs: entry, travel, materials
- Availability and time factors
- Equity of opportunity
- Danger of a one-size-fits-all approach to identification and provision (Riley & Karnes, 2006)

A Schoolwide Approach

1. Careful searching, collation, and distribution of competition information
2. Coordinated planning and supervision of student participation
3. Thorough understanding of purposes and procedures, as well as individual students
4. Community and school support by way of human, fiscal and other resources
5. Development of student skills and attitudes

A Schoolwide Approach: Needs Analysis

- Do you feel there can be improvement in the non-athletic competitions presently offered in your school?
- Are there areas which have need for activities of this nature? What are they?
- Are there other areas which would benefit from an increase in competitions? What are they?
- Do you feel that new competitions could better reflect the needs and desires of the student population?

A Schoolwide Approach: Needs Analysis

- Are there staff members who might be willing to organise and run competitions? List them.
- Are there departments or syndicates within the school that could sponsor or co-sponsor a competition? List them.
- Is there an individual who could monitor or coordinate the competitions? Who?

The Academic Contest Assessment Instrument
Zirkes and Penna (1984)

A Schoolwide Approach: Curricular Alignment

It is advisable that the curriculum experiences (in this case, competitions) “. . . be carefully planned, written down, and implemented in order to maximize their potential effect” (VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2006, pp. 32–33).

“In planning curricular experiences, the competitions selected should **match or fit in** with the rest of the student’s educational program” (Riley & Karnes, 2006, p. 155).

A Schoolwide Approach: Curricular Alignment

Curriculum Model	Curricular Goals	Competition Goals
Enrichment Triad Model (Renzulli, 1977)	Types II and III enrichment: development of how-to skills and investigations of real problems	Development of process skills; individual or team products
Purdue Three-Stage Model (Feldhusen & Kolloff, 1978)	Stage II enrichment: development and application of creative problem solving	Application of creative problem solving strategies to real world problems
Autonomous Learner Model (Betts, 1985)	Orientation, Individual Development, In-depth Study: group and self-understanding; learning skills; projects and mentorships	Development of skills of team work and cooperation, thinking and learning processes, creating individual or team products, self-reflection
Stanley Model of Talent Identification and Development (Benbow & Lubinski, 1997)	Curricular flexibility	Introduction to career pathways; pursuit of topics beyond the traditional curriculum

A Schoolwide Approach: Curricular Alignment

Curriculum Model	Curricular Goals	Competition Goals
The Integrated Curriculum Model (Van Tassel-Baska, 1997)	Advanced knowledge and higher order thinking and processes	Development of process skills embedded in advanced content
Parallel Curriculum Model (Tomlinson, Kaplan, Renzulli, Purcell, Leppien, & Burns, 2002)	Curriculum of Practice and Curriculum of Identity	Emulation of the roles, skills, thinking and actions of professionals; self-reflection
Multiple Menu Model (Renzulli, Leppien and Hays, 2000)	Knowledge, Instructional Products, and Artistic Modification Menus	Developing skills of methodology; product development; sharing personal experiences, values, beliefs and enthusiasm for a particular area of study

A Schoolwide Approach: Competition Goals

1. **Skills and attitudes** related to different ways of competing constructively and responding appropriately to competitive situations (Udvari, 2000);
2. Proficiency in **setting and evaluating competition goals** (Riley & Karnes, 2005) for personal and performance excellence; and
3. **Competence** in locating competition opportunities, gaining sponsorship and/or funding, recruiting team members, and managing public relations (Riley & Karnes, 2005).
4. **specific content areas, teaching and learning processes, or product development skills** needed for successful participation (Riley & Karnes, 2006)

A Schoolwide Approach: Selecting Competitions

- Competition goals
- Age level
- Curricular area
- Entry requirements
- Deadlines
- Costs
- Potential winnings or awards
- Sponsorship or coaching

A Schoolwide Approach: Identification

“For gifted and talented students, their participation in competitions should be for the purpose of providing an optimal learning experience; therefore, the identification process should be seen as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself” (Riley & Karnes, 2006, p. 158).

A Schoolwide Approach: Students to Competitions

- Discuss and list the student's talents.
- Talk about his or her interests and record those.
- Write a list of areas she/he wants to know more about.
- Combine these lists and rank order the top five.
- Select several competitions that will improve or build on these areas and review the guidelines for each one.

A Schoolwide Approach: Students to Competitions

- Is the competition in the area of ability and interest?
- Does the student have the time to participate?
- Are there appropriate resources available?
- Is a sponsor or facilitator needed?
- Is the competition a team event, and if so, are there other interested students?

A Schoolwide Approach: Student Evaluation

1. What did I learn?
2. What did I do right?
3. What could I have done better?
4. What do I need to do in order to do better in the future? (Karnes & Riley, 2005, p. 5)

A Schoolwide Approach: Student Evaluation

COMPETITION SKILLS	Wow! I Competed Brilliantly!	I Competed with Excellence!	I Competed Pretty Well!	I Could Be a Better Competitor!
Time-management	I used my time well to make sure things got done on time and I met all my deadlines.	I usually used my time well, but procrastinated on one thing. I got everything done on time.	I tended to put things off and procrastinate, but I still met my deadlines.	I didn't meet the deadlines I had set for myself.
Planning	I developed a comprehensive competition plan and worked strategically.	I developed a good competition plan.	I did some planning, but I did not think of everything ahead of time.	I did not have a competitions plan.
Team Work	I was a cooperative and collaborative team member. I communicated well and supported others.	I was mostly cooperative and usually communicated with other team members.	I was fairly cooperative, but sometimes I was not a very good team member.	I was not very cooperative and did not really help the team the way I could have.

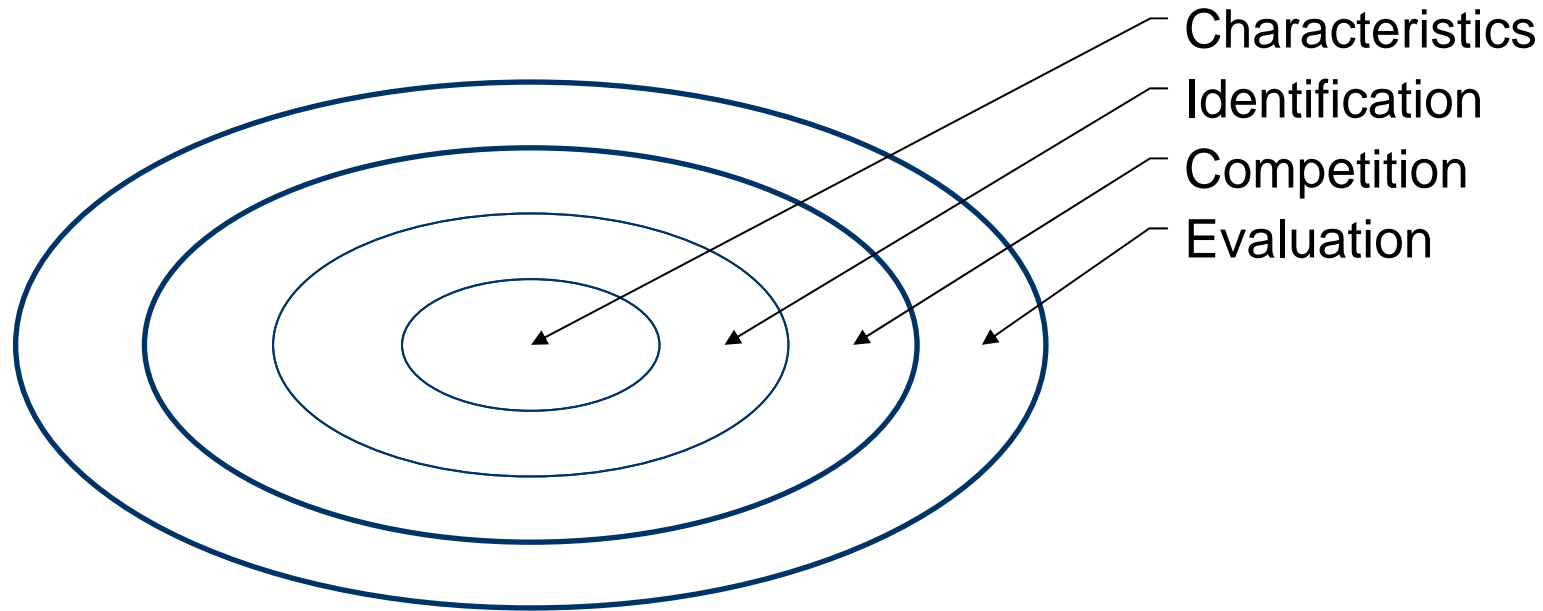
A Schoolwide Approach: Student Evaluation

Preparedness	I had all the materials I needed to compete and was well-prepared.	I had most of what I needed to compete well and was pretty ready for the competition.	I wasn't as prepared as I could have been.	I wasn't ready for this competition. I didn't prepare well.
Pride	I competed to my best effort. I worked hard and it showed!	I competed with a lot of effort.	I tried to compete well, but could have put in more effort.	I didn't try my best and need to put in better effort next time I compete.
Attitude	I had a positive attitude throughout the competition.	I had a positive attitude most of the time during the competition.	I was usually positive about the competition.	I had a negative attitude about the competition.
Appearance	I looked my very best, was neat and tidy, and smiled a lot.	I looked good and appeared fairly confident.	I could have taken more care with my appearance.	I didn't look very nice and could have made my appearance better.

A Schoolwide Approach: Programme Evaluation

- Overall coordination, including policy
- Curricular alignment
- Identification
- Resources and support
- Student outcomes and experiences

A Schoolwide Approach



There should be evidence of the interrelationships between student characteristics, identification, competition goals and purposes, and their evaluation.

Locating Competitions

TKI Gifted and Talented Community Calendar
Gifted and Talented Support for Students
Teaching Online
Ministry of Culture and Heritage

Gifted Child Today magazine

Competitions for Talented Kids by Frances
Karnes and Tracy Riley

Re-forming Gifted Education by Karen Rogers

An Array of Competitions!



An Array of Competitions!



NEW ZEALAND
COMMUNITY TRUST

CHAMBER
MUSIC
CONTEST

Bell Gully



WORLD



BATTLE
of the
BANDS 2006

An Array of Competitions!



“China in Classroom”
Quiz Rumble

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LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER COMPETITION



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Zealand
Mathematics
Enrichment
Trust



Mural
Mural plans

Planning,
preparing
and
painting
your mural

Resene
the paint do professionals use

An Array of Competitions!



Going for Gold: Kiwi Kids Can!



1st Place School Mural



**2006 Future Problem Solving
World Champions**



New Zealand Spelling Bee champion



Newtonian Chicks!

Going for Gold: Kiwi Kids Can!



Secondary Schools' Mooting Competition

Going for Gold: Kiwi Kids Can!



New Zealand Post



School Space Competition



play it
strange
A CHARITABLE TRUST