

Gifted

GATE Booklet: A full training program for teachers to join the Gifted programs – Part 3



Image by Freepik

Content prepared by Dr. Yehuda Hamovitz, Ron Vardi Center, Israel

Language edited by: Martin Svirchev & Zornitsa Staneva, ZinevArt Technologies, Bulgaria Collaborators: Vida

Drąsutė, Edita Rudminaitė, Goda Jocytė, Nojus Martynas Jokubaitis, VšĮ "eMundus", Lithuania 2023

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Teaching techniques and learning strategies

Introduction:

This part provides **the learning** and **methodological materials** from which schools and teachers can get acquainted with learning and teaching methods, approaches and strategies allowing them to embrace and implement in their classes.

The basic assumption of this part is that the teacher will take the somewhat theoretical approach presented and will find how to make it its own. We believe that teaching is a live language in which every user invents their own words, sentences, and paragraphs. This part aims to become an inspiration to this process.

Main Topics included in this part:

- The gifted classroom – understanding and applying.
- The holistic-cognitive approach to teaching gifted children.
- The social-emotional approach to teaching gifted children.
- The gifted classroom as a natural development arena.
- The structure of a curriculum adequate for gifted children.
- Building the skeleton for the curriculum.
- Basic mechanism and approaches in gifted teaching and learning.
- Matching teaching methods to subjects and listeners.
- Learning and teaching strategies. Understanding, matching and applying.
- “Total failure“- Intentional encounter with learning difficulties for building ability and resilience.
- Historic role play – becoming a gifted teacher.
- The dual glasses model for teaching in gifted classes.
- Class orientation vs. individual pupil orientation.
- Knowledge and information vs. skills and capabilities.
- Models for mapping and the analysis of a lesson in gifted class.
- Creating a full pedagogic approach and program.

- Liberated, yet demanding teaching.
- Developing emotional resilience among gifted children.
- The class as a team – psycho-pedagogic approach.
- Pupils as individuals. The gifted-teacher dialog.
- Parallel processes – the gifted class and the teachers' community.
- The gifted class teacher emotional needs.
- Working with parents and families of gifted children.
- Asking questions, time management.



Image 1. Boy Studying and Reading His Book, a photo by RDNE Stock project, Pexels

The gifted classroom understanding and applying

1. The gifted classroom should include the possibility of providing a comprehensive educational response to the gifted, focusing on their **wellbeing**.
2. The ability of this class as an educational setting to optimally address this topic is derived from some of its characteristics:
 - a. Being a classroom within the school.
 - b. The ability to produce a holistic view, based on the understanding that the **cognitive** aspect is intertwined in the **emotional** aspect.
 - c. The opportunity to produce the gifted classroom as a common development space for the individual pupil, the class, and the teachers.
3. Gifted are identified based on their cognitive abilities and achievements. Their main expectations of their parents, teachers, and of their environment focuses on cognitive performance.
4. The central aspect in most gifted programs is the **cognitive one**.
5. Attempts to answer the emotional aspect as well are often reflected in external components of the program, such as emotional

workshops or meetings with the counselor.

6. Those important components express a concept that separates the cognitive and emotional aspects.
7. Modern approaches **emphasize the synchronization of the two aspects**.
8. The gifted possess sharp cognitive tools like **criticism, doubt**, and **rationalization**. Those tools often lead them to their **high achievement** and appreciation from the environment.
9. The gifted display those tools at the forefront of their struggles and sometimes as their business card in the world.
10. They use those cognitive tools to **cope** with the field of **emotions**, either as a **defense mechanism** or as an attempt to understand the world.
11. This tendency often creates distortions in **interpersonal** communication.
12. By **understanding** those mechanisms, the teacher can decide when to adopt this trend and use the cognitive path tools to gain access to their emotional arena which is often blocked or fenced.
13. The teacher can decide when to avoid this trend and try to stimulate an emotional dialog.

The holistic-cognitive approach to teaching gifted pupils

The concept:

Teaching in general and teaching gifted pupils in particular should become a **holistic assignment that integrates whole aspect of the pupil's mind, psyche and personality**. This way we can suitably tailor the right approach for each student, allowing the pupil to bring forward their dominant traits, talents, and abilities, whether intellectual, behavioral or physical.

The map:

A talented teacher can draw a **holistic map** tailored for each of their pupils, which can adjusted from time to time according to developments and improved acquaintance with the pupil. The map should be drawn in relation to **observations, testimonials** from surrounding and personal attitudes as well as approaches. In this manner, different teachers might draw different maps for the same pupils, but those differences will be marginal.

Image 2 presents the 9 components of the holistic-cognitive approach to teaching gifted pupils.

- ✓ Physical & gross motor
- ✓ Fine motor
- ✓ Sensory
- ✓ Self-help
- ✓ Language
- ✓ Cognitive
- ✓ Emotional
- ✓ Social
- ✓ Spiritual



Image 2. The components of the holistic-cognitive approach to teaching gifted pupils.

Each component rises questions to observe, analyze and answer:

Physical & gross motor: structure, concept, theme.

Is the pupil more organized and can focus on a theme or concepts or do they tend to be more scattered and unfocused?

Fine motor: subjects, interests, sources.

Can the pupil relay specific, sometimes dictated subjects or rather innovative and self-focused internal subjects? What are their knowledge and power sources?

Sensory: touching, hugging, getting dirty, working physically

Does the pupil use their physical senses to understand the world in all its dimensions, or do they tend to avoid such experiences? What could be the reasons for this avoidance?

Self-help: self-learning, gaining information, resilience

Is the pupil independent in their conduct, behavior and learning? Are they adept at acquiring information? Are they resilient to failure?

Language: commonly used terms, wording, expressing

Is the pupil verbal? How well do they masters the language, enabling them to understand more complex texts?

Cognitive: understanding situations and generalization

Are the pupils aware of their surroundings? Are they able to derive general principles from specific instances?

Emotional: developing resilience, patience

How well can the pupil maintain calm, exercise restraint, and demonstrate patience towards the teacher and their surroundings? What is their capacity to understand, show, and share emotions?

Social: ability to share, working in a team

What is the pupil's capacity for teamwork? How well can they relay information, share, and cooperate with their surroundings?

Spiritual: developing concept of the world, values

Does the pupil have the ability to grasp the bigger picture? Are they developing a set of constructive values?

The social & emotional approach to teaching gifted pupils

The concept:

Teaching serves as a **container for five vectors of behaviors** that allows the mapping of the pupil in attempt to fully understand them and their needs. Each vector represents a different social and emotional trait of the pupil contributing to the formation of a holistic individual.

- Self-awareness
- Responsible decision-making
- Relationship skills
- Social awareness
- Self-management

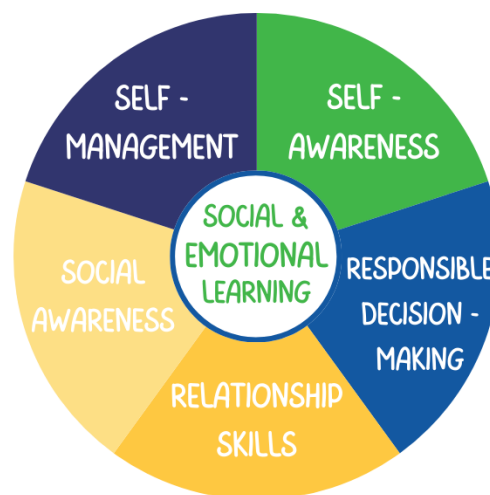


Image 3. Social and emotional learning.

Self-awareness:

Are they occupied thinking how they look, behave, perceived by others?

Responsible decision making:

Does the pupil make decisions that serve their own interests? Are they aware of what those interests are?

Relationship skills:

How do they interact with their peers, with their surroundings (that may be intellectually inferior to them) and with sources of authority?

Social awareness:

Is the pupil aware of their surroundings? Are they aware of the expectations placed upon them? How do they respond to these expectations?

Self-management:

Is the pupil capable of managing everyday duties and responsibilities? What skills or resources are they lacking that would enable them to do so?

The gifted classroom as a natural development arena

The concept:

The gifted classroom serves as a safe space that fosters the natural development of gifted students. In such an environment, students should feel accepted, not stigmatized, and seen as equals. They should be appreciated for their accomplishments and given opportunities to fully realize their potential.

8 components to think of:

1. The classroom is a shared space for growth and development, **not only for the pupils but teachers as well.**
2. It is a space where **growth is a collective process** and hinges on mutual dependence.
3. It is a space where everyone - students and teachers alike - engages in learning beyond just the study material. They learn about themselves and about life as individuals, as a team, as a class, and as a society.
4. **A gifted class should be a space of openness and trust** - this is a challenge when it comes to gifted children which are always critical, doubtful, and sometimes suspicious.
5. The class should be **an opportunity to experience trust** in a protected environment.
6. For the teacher, it represents an “open classroom door,” offering the chance to be observed, assessed, mentored, and given feedback.
7. The gifted and the teachers are observing, watching, assessing and judging each one constantly, as such, the classroom should be a **safe space** to understand and learn from.
8. The classroom is a place where everyone, including the gifted and the teacher, **can be wrong.** Learning in this environment is about how we **handle mistakes** or failures and how we derive knowledge from them.

Building adequate curriculum for teaching gifted classes

Concept:

Building an adequate curriculum for teaching the gifted pupils is an essential stage in constructing an enriching environment where the gifted pupil can flourish. Paying significant attention to the **structure**, skeleton and mechanism of the curriculum will ensure the success of the learning program, the pupils and the teachers. A well-structured curriculum is a key success factor for the school and the program.

The structure of a curriculum for gifted classes:

1. The curriculum will be developed **collaboratively**, involving teachers from gifted classrooms, pedagogic instructors, and other relevant figures.
2. Curriculum **combining** content and teaching styles in order to deliver enrichment, deepening and broadening.
3. Combining **team** learning with **individual** learning.
4. Creating challenging learning experience, which suits the level of pupils, the scope of their knowledge and the relevancy for them. The curriculum should foster **depth** and **complexity**, bridge different fields, and aim to **promote creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking**.
5. Creating the path for **partnership** and **active involvement** of the pupil – involving them in the choice of content for their studies, the way it will be delivered to them and making them a full partner in the pedagogic process.
6. **Matching** the studied content to the individual and to the class, in terms of acceleration, scope and the way it will be presented.
7. **Including the parents** as partners to the educational process within the gifted classes in terms of mutual decision making, **support**, regular updates and general involvement.
8. Including potential **role models** in the curriculum.



Image 4. Laughing Children, a photo by Iqwan Alif, Pexels

Building a basic skeleton for a curriculum:

1. The skeleton will be constructed by integrating emotional and social processes, as well as emphasizing values and their importance. This approach ensures year-to-year **continuity** while integrating content from science, humanities, and art.
2. The skeleton will be developed as a perennial spiral by the school's educational staff in collaboration with a pedagogic instructor. The program will be designed to distribute content and skills across all age groups, ensuring maximum exposure for the gifted children.
3. The skeleton will be constructed according to the following parameters:
 - a. Desired content and skills **matching the needs and interests of the gifted** and the learning opportunities we want to offer.
 - b. At every age level, gifted students should be **exposed to all fields**, including science, humanities, and art.
 - c. There should be **coordination** between the gifted class in the regular school and the gifted school that students attend once a week.
 - d. Coordination across the age layers to create **continuous** educational journey.
 - e. Coordination between the classes at school and **external entities** and programs such as academic seminars and enrichment programs.
 - f. Integrating the curriculum with multidisciplinary and intradisciplinary content to satisfy the **curiosity** of the gifted students.
 - g. In addition to rhetoric, logic, and philosophy, **the curriculum should also include 21st century skills**.

Subjects, tools and mechanism of teaching

Four characteristics of gifted teaching:

- ✓ **Enriching** – revitalize materials to make them more interesting.
- ✓ **Deepening** – delve further into details, motivations, and concepts.
- ✓ **Accelerating** – increase the pace of learning to match students' capabilities.
- ✓ **Compacting** – provide more information and activities to prevent boredom.

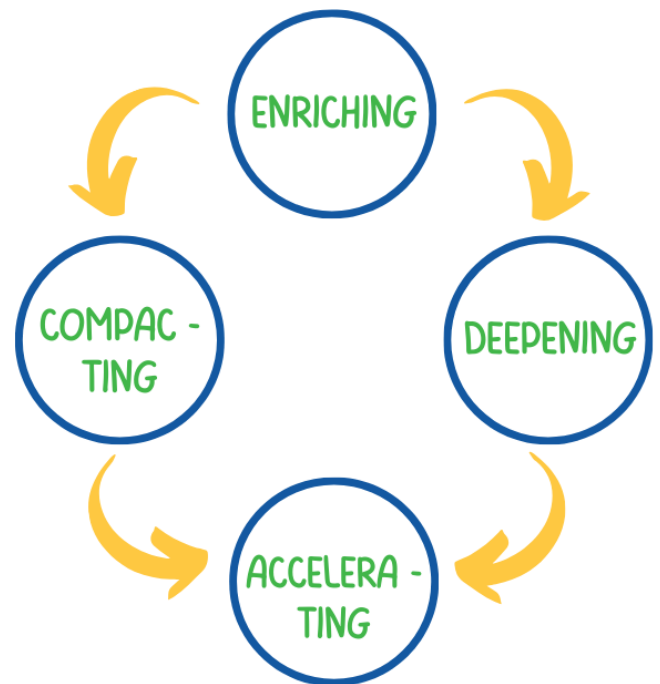


Image 5. Four characteristics of gifted teaching.

Basic mechanism and approach to gifted teaching and learning

1. All gifted classes educate for academic and social excellence.
 - a. Cognitive characteristics of gifted students will require **adapting** teaching methods in the classroom in all areas of knowledge and in all subjects studied.
 - b. The gifted program will treat the gifted class as a **community** with unique emotional and social needs.
 - c. The gifted program will encourage students to **express their talents** in social, community involvement and action, it will as well aim to expand the circles of belonging and influence of the students.
2. The educational staff is required **to become familiar with each of the students in the class**. If necessary, in dialogue with the student and in coordination with his parents.

Matching teaching methods to subjects and listeners:

1. Individual **independent** learning.
2. Choosing and marking challenging **intradisciplinary** subjects with significant importance.
3. Organizing the lessons and teaching units around **problems**, challenges and questions demanding the pupils to creatively think and learn.
4. **Diversity** and **flexibility** in teaching methods on a daily basis.
5. Explicit **engagement** in developing and imparting learning skills and strategies, metacognitive skills, and self-direction of the learner.
6. Selection of teaching methods that foster **interpersonal** skills in all areas of knowledge.
7. **Stalling** on topics - along with changing activities at a fast pace, one must be careful to linger on significant and weighty issues.
8. Usage of **alternative assessment** - adding assessment elements that require personal contribution, high-order thinking and challenge.
9. **Extracurricular** learning, technology and online based learning.

Learning and teaching strategies: understanding matching and applying

The concept:

- The professional approach for **solving** any issue and **coping** with every **dilemma** is having a firm, educated and adequate strategy based on the vision of the strategy maker or the entity he is part of.
- A well-constructed strategy, in general, is vital to the creation of **workplans** to **support the strategy**, the vision and allow achieving the goals and interest deduced from them.
- **Learning strategies** make use of all that is known about gifted intellectual and behavioral development as well as **extensive knowledge on learning and cognitive processes to be integrated into practices** for teachers to use while building their lessons whether for individuals, work teams or whole classes.
- **Teaching strategies** incorporate all we know about **best practices**, approaches, and **techniques in teaching**. These strategies guide us on how to approach a certain topic, whether abstract or tangible, and allow for division into classes, sessions, missions, and exercises.

Adapting strategies to teaching gifted pupils:

- The following chapters take best practices and approaches, generalize them and adapt them into a tool for constructive and adequate learning and teaching strategy for gifted pupils.
- It is an attempt to lay the professional foundations to the field of modern teaching in general and the actual teaching of gifted classes in particular.



Image 6. Woman Reading A Book To The Children, a photo by Yan Krukau, Pexels

"Total failure"

Intentional encounter with learning difficulties for building ability and resilience

Rational:

- Gifted individuals develop a justified self-perception of **having higher learning abilities** at the age of **elementary school**. This perception is based on the scope of successes and the feedback from their surroundings.
- **Secondary school** is the first place when they can **experience difficulties** and even failures coping with academic learning.
- This experience confronts them **without the necessary resilience**, which might lead to discouraging and even avoidance behaviors.
- Those failures might become **formative experiences** that lead to the **maturation** of behavior, resilience, and strength.

Goals of the teaching practices:

- Developing capabilities and **resilience** which allow **coping** with difficulties and failures.
- Developing the capabilities of working in **uncertain** conditions.
- Developing **meta-cognitive** skills.
- Building a class **environment** in which difficulties and failure are not connected to “not being smart enough”.

Basic principles of the teaching practices:

- **Confronting** the difficulties and the failures.
- Working in **uncertain** conditions.
- **Class climate** nurturing learning.
- Working on **reflection** and meta-cognitive skills.

Confronting the difficulties and the failures:

- Delivering very **difficult assignments**.
- **Condensed** or partial teaching.
- **Emphasize the mistakes**, but not the person who made them.
- **Specification** of the difficulty.

Working in uncertain conditions:

- Leaving **questions open** and unsolved.
- The teacher **refrains** from referring to answers and solutions.
- Practicing a technique to **achieve a solution** without understanding it (like in mathematics).
- Modeling of exercises solving by the teacher.

Class climate nurturing learning:

- **Legitimizing** the lack of understanding or difficulties
- **Criticizing** patronizing, snobbish and **arrogant behaviors**.
- **Learning from mistakes**.
- Focusing on developing **questioning skills** rather than just answering skills.

Working on reflection and meta-cognitive skills:

- Assigning **self-study tasks** and later reflecting on the **process** rather than the outcomes.
- **Sharing** pedagogic considerations for given assignments.
- Engaging in **mutual** learning before an examination.



Image 7. Learn from Failure.

Historic role play - Jigsaw

Goals of the teaching practice:

- Promoting significant and challenging learning.
- A response to the multiple intelligences and the diverse roles in the class.
- An opportunity to interrelated work among the gifted, thereby nurturing social aspects.
- Responding to the gifted students' need for autonomy.

Basic principle of the teaching practice:

- **Pupils work in teams**, conduct research and create knowledge around the chosen subject.
- Having a **significant assignment** that is thoughtfully arranged.
- The assignment demands **complex processing** of data and knowledge.



Image 8. Photo of Four Girls Wearing School Uniform Doing Hand Signs, a photo by 周康, Pexels

The ingenuity:

- In the initial stages, pupils work on sub-subjects in teams.
- In the second stage, pupils from the original team are **redivided** into **integration teams** that deal with the entire scope of the subject. See the chart below.

Preparation needed:

- Selecting the subject that will serve as the basis for the assignment
- Defining the purpose and goals of the assignment.
- Breaking down the assignment into sub-assignments to be distributed to the different first-stage teams.
- After careful consideration, dividing the pupils into second-stage teams and

assigning them the appropriate matched sub-assignments.

Modus operandi – 13 components:

1. Introduction and prologue to the subject or topic.
2. Dividing class to first-stage teams.
3. Teams research and understand the sub-assignments.
4. Teams organize themselves by dividing responsibilities.
5. Launch of assignments.
6. Work process – teams work towards delivery.
7. Completion of the sub-assignment.
8. Class divided to second-stage teams.
9. Each team member contributes specific knowledge from their sub-subject team.
10. Second-stage teams work to complete the final stage of the assignment.
11. The final product is compiled and delivered by each team.
12. General understanding and analysis of results and process.
13. General evaluation of the delivery – both the process and the results.

MODUS APERANDI – EXAMPLE

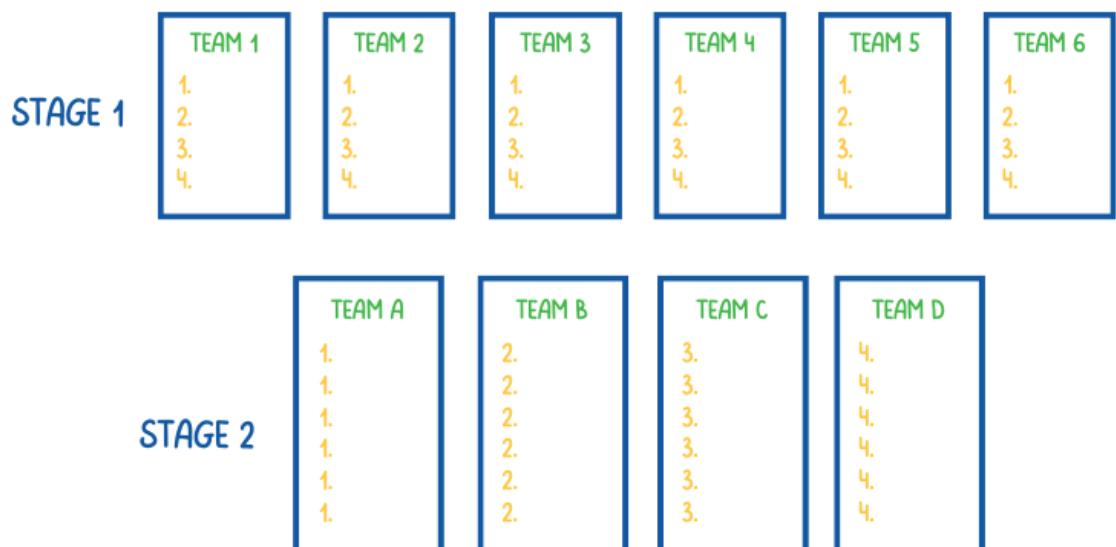


Image 9. An example of possible Modus operandi.

The dual glasses model for teaching in gifted classes

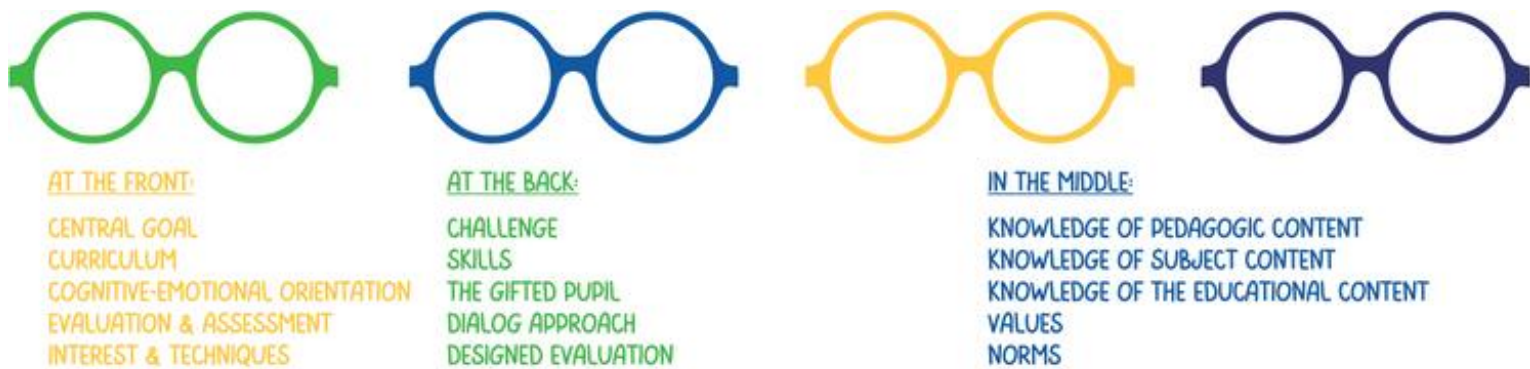


Image 10. The dual glasses model.

The concept:

When building a learning program, whether it's for a course or a one-time lesson, one needs to view the situation through three pairs of glasses. These glasses focus on **three different aspects** that integrate into one comprehensive scene.

At the back:

- ✓ **Challenges** – What are they? What is their impact?
- ✓ **Skills** – What skills are needed? Are they available?
- ✓ **The pupils** – Who are they? What are their characteristics and traits?
- ✓ **Dialog approach** – What needs to be spoken?
- ✓ **Designed evaluation** – How are conduct and success evaluated?

At the middle:

- ✓ **Knowledge of pedagogic content** – Does it exist already or does it need to be acquired?
- ✓ **Knowledge of subject content** - Does it exist already or does it need to be acquired?
- ✓ **Knowledge of the educational content** - Does it exist already or does it need to

be acquired?

- ✓ **Values** – What are the desired values needed to be embedded?
- ✓ **Norms** - What are the desired norms needed to be embedded?

At the front:

- ✓ **Central goal** – What is the importance of learning this subject?
- ✓ **Curriculum** – What is the strategy to succeed?
- ✓ **Cognitive-emotional relations** – Are they being taken into consideration?
- ✓ **Evaluation & assessment** – How is the success of the pupils and the teacher being measured?
- ✓ **Interests & techniques** – What interests have been raised, and what techniques have been used?

Class orientation vs. pupil orientation

The dilemmas:

- ✓ The need to treat all pupils as equals, despite their differences.
- ✓ In the gifted class, as in all classes, there are pupils who excel and others who struggle.
- ✓ The need to foster curiosity, security, and potential among the less advanced pupils.
- ✓ The need to prevent boredom among the more advanced pupils while addressing the needs of the less advanced.

The practice at the gifted class:

- ✓ Preferring teamwork and social interaction.
- ✓ Creating a secure environment by nurturing respect and compassion.
- ✓ Creating the understanding of the “big wheel” – sometimes you are up and sometimes you are at the bottom, and it will always happen.
- ✓ You, as the teacher, cannot satisfy everyone all the time!! There will always be someone that is not satisfied, and this is real life.
- ✓ The teacher is not superman (or superwoman) and is not in a competition of who is smarter.



The difference between an adult and a child (with no connection to age) is that the adult finally understands that not everybody will like him, and its OK!

Knowledge and information vs. skills and capabilities

The basic principle:

Knowledge and information are easy to retrieve and are accessible.

Skills need to be taught and capabilities need to be built and nurtured.

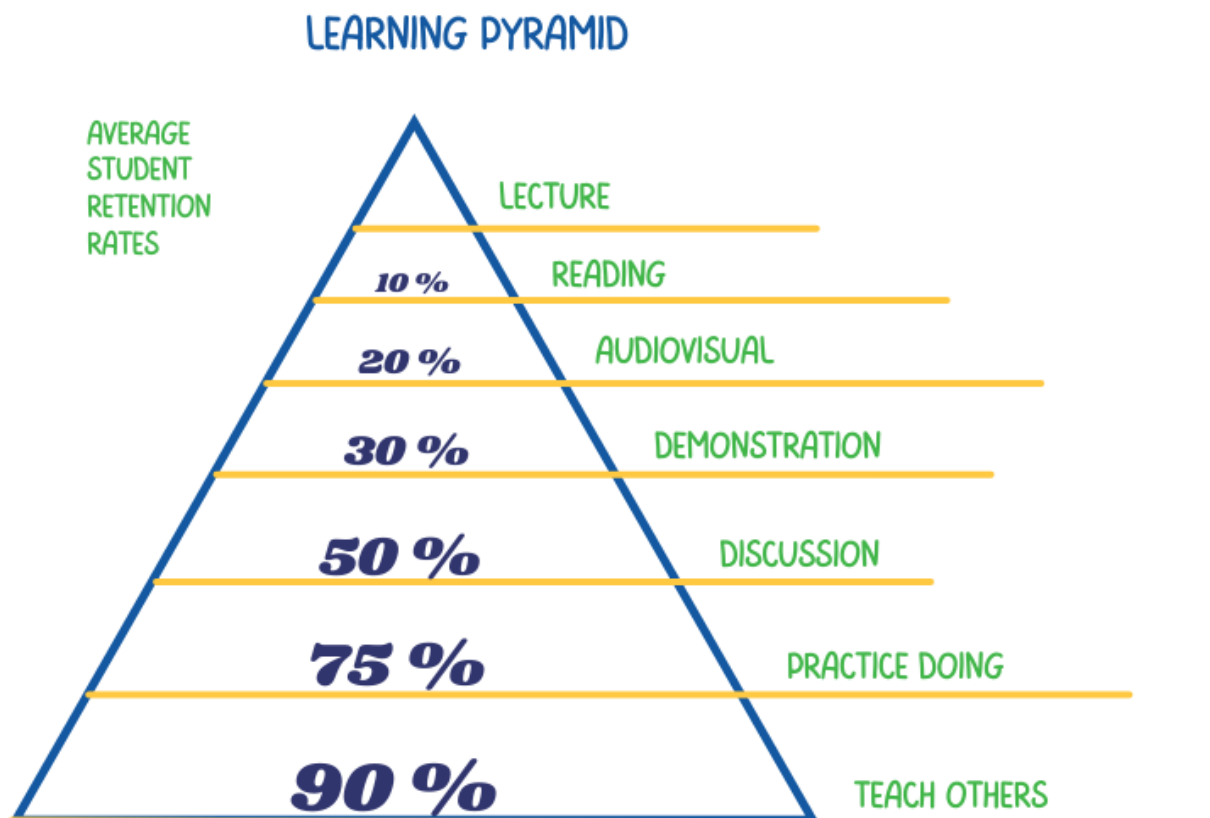


Image 11. The Learning Pyramid showcasing the average student retention rate

The practice at the gifted class:

- **Vast and broad knowledge** is preferred over minimal knowledge with a deep drill-down to details.
- “The beauty of the story” – **reflection and feelings based on the details** rather than details alone (for example, in History). The gifted students would need to prove their point by referring to the details.
- The guild approach - viewing the gifted as **apprentices** learning how to do the job from the master.
- **Cross-learning** – connecting new subjects to subjects learned before, or that are studied with other teachers in other professions or in connection to present, future or historic events.

Model for mapping and the analysis of a lesson in gifted class

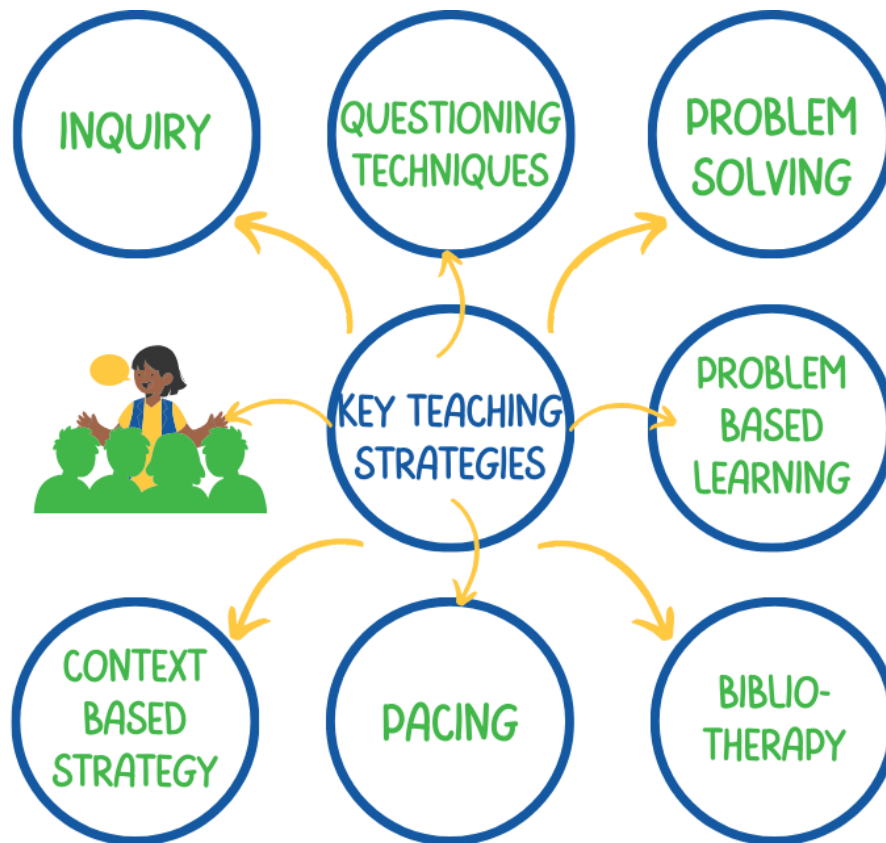


Image 12. Model for mapping and the analysis of a lesson in gifted class.

Essence:

An excellently formulated lesson is one that is constructed in **measurable layers**. It involves the **ability to formulate** the entire lesson and its parts, and to lay them out in a manner that allows for control over conduct and subsequent evaluation.

COMPARISON OF CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING, INQUIRY AND PROBLEM - BASED LEARNING

DIMENSION	CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING	INQUIRY	PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING
NATURE OF THE PROBLEM	Starts with a discussion in which learners seek to understand the problem	Starts with a presentation of a puzzling situation	Starts with the presentation of a real-world problem
ROLE OF THE TEACHER	Facilitator of group process	Question poser	Metacognitive coach
ROLE OF LEARNERS	Construct meaning through generating ideas	Construct meaning through questions, data collection, and analysis	Construct meaning through metacognitive and scientific inquiring
APPLICATION OR TRANSFER OF LEARNING	Application of plan to action	Application to conceptual	Application to real world

Image 13. The comparison matrix of 3 of the known key teaching strategies

Table analysis of a lesson – before class

Build a table that outlines the subject and conduct before, during, and after class in relation to the techniques used, the time allocated, and the teaching methods employed. This way, all vectors of the matrix can be evaluated for further development.

BEFORE CLASS

	TECHNIQUE	TIME	MEAN	EVALUATION
SUBJECT SELECTION				
BEFORE CLASS				
IN CLASS		90 min		
AFTER CLASS				
EVALUATION				

Image 14. Table that outlines the subject and conduct before, during, and after class in relation to the techniques used, the time allocated, and the teaching methods employed.

Table analysis of a lesson – in class

Build a table that outlines the lesson by preliminarily **describing the tasks**, **dividing the assignments**, detailing the **teamwork** needed, and specifying the way to **present results**. This should be done in relation to the techniques used, the time allocated, and the teaching methods employed. This way, all vectors of the matrix can be evaluated for further development.

IN CLASS - 90 MINUTES

	TECHNIQUE	TIME	MEAN	EVALUATION
PRESENTING TASK				
DIVIDING ASSIGNMENTS				
TEAMWORK				
PRESENTING RESULTS				
EVALUATION				

Image 15. Table that outlines the lesson by preliminarily describing the tasks, dividing the assignments, detailing the teamwork needed, and specifying the way to present results.

Creating a full pedagogic approach and program

Context:

- ✓ The teaching staff of the gifted classes should specialize in this field and continually study and deepen their understanding of the subject
- ✓ The main issues that staff need to prepare for:
 - Characteristics of the gifted and their identification.
 - Cognitive aspects of gifted children.
 - Emotional and social aspects of gifted children.
 - The gifted relationship with their surroundings: teachers, parents, siblings and other educational frameworks.
 - Special Pedagogy.

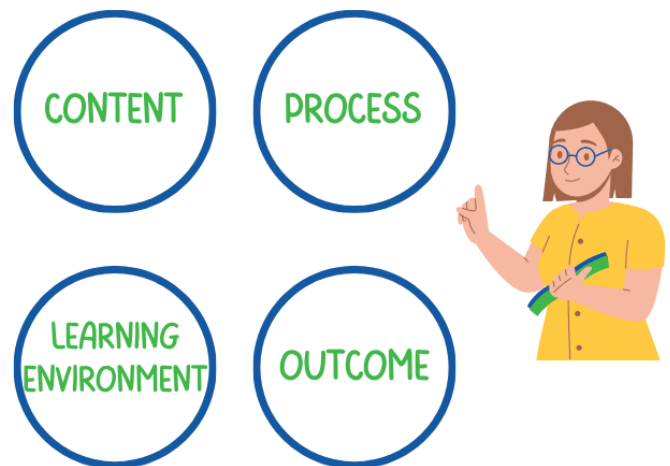
- Social welfare values.
- Developing creative thinking.
- Working with parents of gifted students.

An integrated model for creating direct pedagogy for gifted pupils.

(Joan maker 1982 – renewed)

Content:

- Simplification
- Complexity
- Ex-curriculum
- Life itself
- Reorganization for learning
- Values
- Issues from the real world
- Content chosen by pupil
- Learning environment



Process:

- Complex thinking
- Experts' research methods
- Assembling research hypothesis
- Learning through research
- Open self-experimentation
- Flexible learning pace
- Reflection and study
- Pupils process choice
- Variety and diversity



Image 16. Man looking at the board, a photo by Startup Stock Photos, Pexels

Learning environment:

- Accepting
- Complex
- Flexible
- Highly mobile
- Independent
- Concentrating on the pupil
- Open
- Utilizing flexible team organization



Outcome:

- Authentic audience
- Evaluation, assessment and feedback
- Pupil's outcome choice
- Formation and transformation
- Variety and diversity



Liberated, yet demanding teaching

The rational:

- There is no point in frontal teaching.
- Emphasis on process and not on accumulating knowledge.
- The teacher acts as a supervisor of the learning processes.
- Creating a dynamic learning process that progresses in response to both the class and the teacher.

The goals:

- Independent learning and taking responsibility for delivery.
- Nurturing curiosity and joy of learning.
- Developing learning skills and capabilities – research, analysis, questioning, fact-based academic writing.
- Formulating a reasoned and well-founded worldview on various topics and a gaining better understanding of the world's complexity.

Basic principles:

- Liberated teaching - The teacher acts as a guide, not a leader.
- Demanding teaching – High expectations are set, promoting self-learning.
- Creating an internal class culture – The teacher is not the sole owner of knowledge. The class takes responsibility for learning.

Modus operandi:

DESIGNING THE CURRICULUM AND CHOOSING
SUBJECTS AND MATERIALS

TEACHING PROCESS 1 - SELF LEARNING

TEACHING PROCESS 2 - COMMON AND
SHARED CONVERSATION

DEMONSTRATION OF UNDERSTANDING

GETTING ORGANIZED - SPACE, TIME AND TECHNOLOGY

FORMULATED EVALUATION

Image 17. Example of Modus Operandi

Developing emotional resilience among gifted children

The essence:

- One of the key ideas behind “Emotional Response” is that a part of the teacher’s role is to help gifted students develop emotional and mental resilience.
- How to cope with this huge task? There is no recipe.
- We can identify a series of messages promoting emotional resilience. In the specific context of the gifted, it’s worth thinking about how these messages can be integrated with the class.

The messages are:

- Multiple points of view: it’s important to develop the understanding that a student’s point of view is just one of many. This understanding is crucial for developing relationships with others.
- The understanding that every experience is temporary and changing: recognizing the fluidity of life, the continuum of past, present, and future, and the accumulation of knowledge and experience as a path for development.
- Friendliness and Humor: moderating the seriousness often characterizing gifted individuals, lightening up and joking about things as a means of blending into broader society.
- See the positive: gifted individuals, as analytical thinkers, tend to focus on the negative, the deviant, and the wrong. This tendency should be balanced with positive experiences.
- The power of togetherness and belonging: an individual cannot satisfy their needs alone. We need others to relate to. Gifted individuals need to explore a common language with their surroundings to experience a sense of belonging.
- The power of influence: gifted individuals have the ability and tendency to grasp the “big picture”, which can sometimes lead to feelings of inferiority, powerlessness, and despair. The story of David vs. Goliath is a key subject where the seemingly inferior, armed with wisdom, defeats evil.
- Multiple ways to exist in the world: gifted individuals often perceive

themselves as different and strange in society, which can lead to introverted tendencies. They need guidance to engage with the world, using their strengths to become equal and influential members of their community.



Image 18. Group of Children Looking at Animal Skull, a photo by cottonbro studio, Pexels

Exploring the outer world



Image 19. David and Goliath. Picture taken from <https://www.osagame.com/2019-9-16-david-and-goliath/>

David vs. Goliath

The classroom as a team

Psycho-pedagogic lesson

Schools tend to emphasize two major and separate arenas:

- The teaching and educating arena: it is perceived as cognitive, intellectual, and professional, and falls under the responsibility of the teacher in the classroom.
- The social-emotional arena: it is perceived as an additional aspect to the main professional arena and is under the responsibility of the class educator, school counselor, and school psychologist.

The psycho-pedagogic approach claims:

- The separation of the two arenas is impossible, and teachers in the classroom should be aware of and integrate the two arenas in all interactions with the students. This need becomes more significant and crucial with gifted students.
- The interrelations among the gifted pupils themselves and between them and the teachers cannot be separated. Instead, they should be addressed together by approaching teaching as teamwork, in which the professional subject is intertwined with the team's emotions towards it and the methods for dealing with those emotions.

Before, during and after class:

- ✓ **Before class** – consider the social-emotional aspect while planning the lesson.
- ✓ **During class** – Conduct a social-emotional conversation with the gifted students centered around the professional subject.
- ✓ **After class** – reflection, analysis, conclusion and inclusion.

Before class: thinking on the social-emotional aspect while constructing the lesson:

- What do the gifted feel in relation to the subjects learned?

- How will they feel with the new material?
- What are the gaps between the gifted in the class? How can these be bridged?
- What were the significant events this week, and what was their influence?
- How do I, as the teacher, feel about the subjects being taught?
- What should be the ration between studying and self-learning?
- Should I employ individual learning or group learning strategies?

During class: conducting a social-emotional conversation with the gifted around the professional subject.

- Emotional conversation should be a part of discussions in class.
- Spontaneous emotional conversations about the subjects being learned should be allowed.
- The teacher is an integral part of the emotional conversation and serves as a role model in handling it.
- The emotional conversation is a crucial part of the learning process and not a side effect.



Image 20. People Looking at Laptop Computer, a photo by Fox, Pexels

After class: reflection, analysis, conclusion and inclusion.

- When analyzing the class, the teacher's focus should not solely be on whether all planned subjects were covered, but also on how they managed the emotions in class.
- The teacher should self-evaluate, questioning if they were satisfied with the result, their ability to handle the questions asked, and their management of the constant emotional storms that occurred.

Pupils as individuals, teacher-gifted dialog

The essence:

- The conversation with the gifted, although similar in subjects with a common pupil, should be conducted differently.
- The teacher's role is not that of a semi-parent who is stronger and controls resources, but more of a colleague who exchanges thoughts and experiences.
- The dialog should be between two educated people that strive together to achieve something. The teacher and the gifted student are in the same boat.
- Conversations about learning and academic achievements should transform to discuss their implications on life, society, and the future.

A good conversation should have the following characteristics:

- No dominance. We are all equal.
- A mutual attempt to explore the gifted individual's inner world.
- The permanent relations with the gifted class, society, obligations, thoughts & feelings and friends should serve as a central reference point.
- Touching emotions, with the right quantity and depth, directly or indirectly.
- Navigating among opportunities, chances, expectations and desires.
- Using S.W.O.T analysis is recommended.



Image 21. S.W.O.T. Analysis chart

Where does it hurt? The gifted class teacher's emotional needs

The essence:

- Teachers in gifted classes often experience emotional flooding and sometimes even distress. It's not easy to be a teacher in these classes.
- Just as the gifted need constant emotional support, teachers in those classes need it as well.
- It is the responsibility of the educational system to ensure they receive it.
- Concurrently, an intra-school support group among the teachers can be very beneficial in the short term.
- Coping with the emotional aspects of teaching in gifted classes should be an integral part of teacher training for these classes.



Image 22. Woman Sitting in Front of laptop, a photo by energpic.com, Pexels

Means to cope that should be developed by the school:



Image 23. Means to cope that should be developed by the school

What do the teachers need?

Based on Abraham Maslow hierarchy of needs (1943)

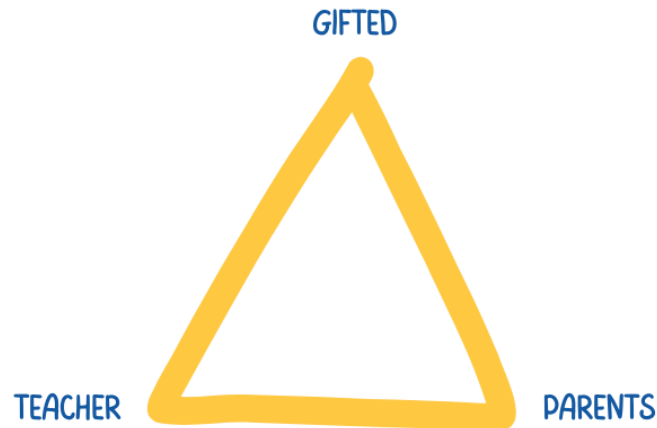
ABRAHAM MASLOW HIERARCHY OF NEEDS (1943)



Image 24. Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Working with the gifted parents

The triangle: gifted – teacher – parents



Parents of gifted children have to cope with:

- Extreme curiosity.
- Constant search for justice.
- High and sometimes condescending language.
- Extremely fast thinking.
- Strongly reacting to stimulus situation.
- Jumping to the right answer without the ability to explain how and why.
- A vast need for autonomy.
- Significant gaps in behaviors and areas of function.
- Connecting high intelligence with maturity.
- Great expectation that can result with disappointment.

Parents of gifted children should avoid:

- Treating the gifted child as the central life project of the parent.
- Exerting parental pressure to demonstrate the child's giftedness.
- Treating the gifted as "small adult".
- Having extreme expectations from the gifted child.
- Delivering the message that the gifted child could be independent.

Gifted need from their parents:

- Boundaries and limitations. Being gifted does not equate to being “prince”.
- Assistance with executive functioning.
- Realistic expectations and ability to handle failure.
- Feedback based on effort and investment, not just the end result.
- Support for the gifted child’s preferences and interests.

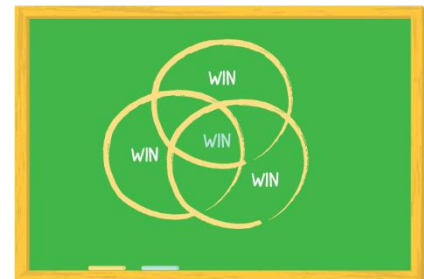
Conflicts that might rise:

- ✓ Parents relying on the school to handle all aspects of their gifted child’s education and provide solutions to everything.
- ✓ Blaming school and the teachers for not meeting expectations and for any perceived failures.

Seek for win-win: school-family relations

Achieving a win-win solution in conflict with families of gifted pupils:

- ✓ Identify the family's situation, needs, complexities and problems.
- ✓ Identify your interests. What do you want to accomplish?
- ✓ Identify the facts and arguments to support school's side.
- ✓ Think of the possible desires of the family as a whole and parents in particular.
- ✓ Open lines of communications with all family members and empower the parents.
- ✓ Lead to a solution with positive outcome for all sides, agreed upon by all.



Asking questions

Essence:

Asking the right question is at the heart of effective communication and information exchange. By asking the right questions in a particular situation, you can improve a whole range of communications skills.

For example, you can gather better information and learn more. You can build stronger relationships, manage people more effectively, and help others to learn as well.

Open and Closed Questions:

- **A closed question** usually elicits a single word or a very short, factual answer. For example, "Are you thirsty?" the answer is either "Yes" or "No"; "Where do you live?" the answer is generally the name of your town or your address.
- **Open questions**, on the other hand, call for a more detailed answer. They usually begin with "what", "why", or "how". An open question prompts the respondent to share their knowledge, opinion, or feelings. Phrases like "Tell me" and "Describe" can also function as open questions.

Inquiry Questions:

- Asking inquiry questions is a strategy for finding out more details.
- Sometimes, it's as simple as requesting an example from your respondent to better understand a statement they've made.
- Other times, you might need additional information for clarification. For instance, "When do you need this report by, and would you like to review a draft before I submit the final version?"
- Alternatively, you might need to verify the validity of a statement, such as, "How do you know that the new database can't be used?"



Funnel Questions:

- A technique that involves starting with general questions, and then drilling down to a more specific point in each. Usually, this will involve asking for more and more details at each level. It's often used by detectives taking a statement from a witness:
- "How many people were involved in the fight? "- "About ten"
- "Were they kids or adults? "- "Mostly kids".
- "What sort of ages were they? "- "About fourteen or fifteen".
- "Were any of them wearing anything distinctive? "- "Yes, several of them had red baseball caps on".
- "Can you remember if there was a logo on any of the caps? "- "Now that you mention it, yes, I remember seeing a big letter 'N' ".

HOW TPO RESPOND TO VARIOUS QUESTIONS

QUESTION	RESPONSE
Pupil asks about something that was already discussed in class	Transfer the question to the class and ask, “who can answer the question?”
Pupil asks a clarification question on something you now talk about	Answer by finding other words to explain the same thing
Pupil asks something that divert the conversation to places you don’t want	Apologizing for not answering and diverting conversation back to track
Pupil asks question that clearly come for resisting place	Relating to the resistance and promise the pupil to answer his question after class
Pupil asks something related but not connected to the flow of the lesson	Is short answer and continue, if long, promise to discuss it after class
Pupil asks about something that comes later at the flow of the lesson	Relate shortly and promise that the question will be answered later in class

Image 25. How to respond to various questions.

Managing teachers' time

Teachers' time-consuming tasks:

- ✓ Plan and prepare lessons
- ✓ Plan and prepare papers and exams
- ✓ Check and mark papers and exams
- ✓ Speaking with pupils
- ✓ Speaking with parents
- ✓ Speaking with visitors
- ✓ Speaking with colleagues
- ✓ Staff meetings
- ✓ Professional trainings

Teachers usually lack time for:

- ✓ Themselves
- ✓ Their family
- ✓ Their social life

This is often referred to as the lack of a **work-life balance**.

Important: Organize yourself before you organize others

Prepare a list that separates assignments from to active & reactive:

- **Proactive** – tasks connected to the essence of your job.
- **Reactive** – tasks dealing with the efficient flow of your job.

Set priorities by matter of importance and urgency:

- **Important** – connected to the essence of your job and requires deep consideration (usually proactive assignments).
- **Urgent** – something that is needed to be dealt with immediately (usually reactive assignments).

Set timeslots:

- **Long** – for important issues and assignments (usually proactive assignments).
- **Short** – for urgent and immediate issues and assignments (usually reactive assignments).



Image 26. Assignments organization chart based on the urgency and importance of the assignment

Basic time rules for teachers:

- ✓ Every teacher deserves a break!!
- ✓ Don't spent more than 1/3 of your break on urgent issues.
- ✓ Set time for important issues – make sure to announce it.
- ✓ Set time for speaking with you on the telephone – make sure to announce it.
- ✓ Reserve speaking on the phone only for urgent issues.
- ✓ 3 minutes rule: if the conversation takes more than 3 minutes – it's not urgent!!