Guide to Success
Middle School (Grades 6–8)
A resource of the Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP).

TEXAS PERFORMANCE STANDARDS PROJECT
Education Agency
Texas
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Introduction

The Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP) is a resource for providing differentiated instruction to gifted/talented (G/T) students (and can be used for providing enhanced academic opportunities for all students). The TPSP provides a coherent package of standards, curriculum, and assessments for use in G/T programs from kindergarten through high school. The goal of the TPSP is to provide resources for G/T teachers and students that allow students to create professional quality work in alignment with the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students. This Guide to Success (Middle School) is provided to support classroom implementation of the TPSP in grades 6–8.

Implementing TPSP in the Classroom

Key Resources

Teachers of gifted and talented students are tasked with modifying curriculum and instruction to meet gifted learner needs through depth, complexity, and appropriate pacing. To support classroom learning, the TPSP provides a framework for G/T instruction with detailed guidelines for implementing and assessing independent learning experiences and research projects. Together, these resources—which include TPSP learning tasks, assessment rubrics, and grade-level Continuum of Learning Experiences Framework (COLEF) charts—provide a foundation for a rigorous and coherent plan of instruction for gifted learners.

This guide includes an overview and introduction to key TPSP resources to support teachers in providing high quality G/T services. Additional training available through regional education service centers is also recommended. In the pages that follow, the Guide to Success (Middle School) will summarize the following key TPSP instructional supports and provide suggestions for how and when to use them in G/T classrooms.

- Tasks
- Assessments
- Continuum of Learning Experiences Frameworks (COLEFs)
- Additional resources

TPSP tasks provide a curriculum framework and series of classroom learning experiences and projects developed for G/T students. The tasks are based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)
and focus on the foundation content areas of English language arts and reading, mathematics, science, and social studies with interdisciplinary connections. All tasks include relevant TEKS as well as the appropriate College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS).

The grade-level task sets are designed to be flexible, and teachers can use one or more tasks with individual or groups of students and/or integrate tasks into existing programs and curricula as appropriate. The table below provides an overview of the tasks designed for students at the middle school level (grades 6–8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Unit Title</th>
<th>Content Focus Area</th>
<th>7E Model*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Everyone’s a Winner: A Study of Conflict and Mediation</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Instant Millionaire</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Products in Motion</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Culture Shock</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Rites of Passage</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Lifestyles of the Fit and Famous</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Game of Life™</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Tell a Tale of a Trail</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Figure It Out!</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Analyzing Awesome Authors</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Challenging the System</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Sudden Impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 6–8</td>
<td>Pursuit of Passion</td>
<td>ELA &amp; Reading</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note that the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has redesigned a portion of TPSP tasks to reflect a 7E framework. The tasks that have been converted to the new framework are indicated in the chart. For discussion of the 7E framework, see 7E model.

Assessment rubrics are also provided to guide ongoing formative and summative assessment of student work based on rigorous scoring criteria and a continuum of proficiency aligned with the state goal for G/T services:

*Students who participate in services designed for gifted/talented students will demonstrate skills in self-directed learning, thinking, research, and communication as evidenced by the development of innovative products and performances that reflect individuality and creativity and are advanced in relation to students of similar age, experience, or environment.*

Using the rubrics, student performance on TPSP tasks can be evaluated in three areas: research process, product/performance, and communication.
The **Continuum of Learning Experiences Framework (COLEF)** charts for each grade level can be used to guide students through the research process, including developing a research plan, conducting authentic research, and sharing findings. When used in concert with tasks and assessments, the COLEFs provide a comprehensive framework for instruction that ensures the depth and complexity of learning specified in the Texas state plan for G/T instruction.

In addition, at each school level, the TPSP provides supporting resources, including the following:

- **Sample forms** are provided to serve as templates to support teachers and students in class activities and administration. Forms were designed for a variety of purposes, including, but not limited to, communicating expectations to students and parents, planning projects and time management, permissions, research proposal development, documenting learning, and presentation tips.

- **A sample project** is also included for each school level as an example of student work to give teachers an idea of what final task products/performances might look like at the targeted grade-level span.

- Another key resource to support implementation is the **Gifted/Talented Teacher Toolkit**.

The rest of the guide will describe each of these key resources in more detail followed by information for recommended additional training opportunities.
TPSP Tasks

Task Design

The TPSP includes a series of tasks (at least two per grade level) that provide learning and teaching activities specifically designed for G/T students. The structure and content of the tasks provide the following:

- wide variety of choices for student learning;
- flexibility to pursue topics of student interest;
- real-life research experiences; and
- focus on a high-quality product/performance and presentation.

While the tasks provide teachers with a structured curriculum, they are open ended and can be extended and adapted. Teachers have the freedom to make appropriate adjustments and enhancements as appropriate for their individual classrooms, schedules, and students. New teachers may want to follow the tasks closely, while more experienced teachers may wish to modify the tasks to better align with the needs of their students.

Task components

Each task at the middle school level contains the following:

- a description of the unit, including the purpose and major activity focus and interdisciplinary connections (e.g., “allows students to study geometric shapes and apply mathematical skills in the creation of a play”);
- goals that articulate specific learning objectives associated with task activities;
- step-by-step instructions for introducing and guiding students through a two-phase series of learning and research activities;
- a description of the intended research product/performance;
- communication tips for guiding class discussion/review of final products/performances;
- a list of completed task components, artifacts, and products for assessment;
- resources to support instruction such as books and websites; and
- applicable foundation content area and interdisciplinary TEKS and College and Career Readiness standards.
Phase I and II activities

The two-phase activity format for the middle school grade levels consists of the following:

- **Phase I, Learning Experiences**, which are a suggested series of TEKS-based lessons and performances to be used in large groups, in small groups, and/or individually. Phase I activities allow students to work with advanced content and processes through a discipline-based research model. Phase I is developmental and formative.

- In **Phase II, Independent Research**, students utilize and extend their learning from Phase I to develop a product/performance. The product/performance provides students with opportunities to synthesize learning, apply knowledge to a novel situation, and provide an advanced, high-quality demonstration of the student’s knowledge and skills.

Instructional activities and supports provided in tasks for each phase typically include the following:

- **Phase I, Learning Experiences**—introductory activities, content review and vocabulary, suggested readings, hands-on activities, and discussion topics as well as tips on grouping and classroom management;

- **Phase II, Research Process**—tips for helping students select research topics, guiding questions, and facilitation suggestions for all steps of the research process, including ideas for sharing findings.

**7E model**

Currently, approximately half of the TPSP tasks have been restructured to reflect a 7E instructional framework. The 7E model is an extension of the original 5E model developed by a team of educators at the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study to maximize student engagement in learning. The seven “Es” of the model are as follows:

- **Elicit**—Access and ascertain prior knowledge and understanding
  - Teacher can frame “What do you think?” questions.

- **Engage**—Generate enthusiasm and stimulate interest and thinking
  - Teacher can surprise students, get students thinking, or raise questions through compelling demonstrations or presentations.

- **Explore**—Provide opportunities to observe, record data, design experiments, interpret results, organize findings
  - Teacher can frame questions, suggest approaches, provide feedback, and assess understanding.

- **Explain**—Introduce models, laws, and theories
  - Teacher can guide students toward generalizations and provide terminology and questions that help students explain their explorations.
• Elaborate—Provide opportunities to apply knowledge to new domains
  ○ Teacher can introduce new variables and pose new questions/scenarios in which students practice transfer of knowledge.

• Evaluate—Provide formative and summative assessment opportunities, including self-reflection
  ○ Teacher can conduct ongoing assessment of student learning through all phases.

• Extend—Provide additional challenges that allow students to apply knowledge
  Teachers can provide new contexts for application of knowledge that allow students to go one step further. ¹

For those TPSP tasks adapted to the 7E format, Phase I Learning Experiences provide suggested activities aligned with Elicit, Engage, Explore, and Explain. Phase II Research Process provides suggested activities to Elaborate, Explain, Evaluate, and Extend. While 7E tasks will always begin with Elicit and Engage and end with Evaluate and Extend, the sequence of Explore, Explain, and Elaborate can vary, often with recurrences of Explore and Explain throughout the task.

Suggestions for Selecting Tasks

The tasks were designed to give teachers the flexibility to integrate the TPSP into their instruction. The tasks are intended as models for use in the classroom that can be modified to meet the needs of individual students, classrooms, and schools. If time and resources permit, teachers should introduce all of the tasks to students so they can choose which task they want to complete. Because of the intensity of study, teachers should encourage students to choose a task that best reinforces their interests and strengths.

To help students pick a task, teachers may have them consider questions such as the following:

• How can you use this task to make a difference in your community?
• How can you apply this task to a real-world situation?
• How will this task have an impact on you?

If circumstances require that all students complete the same task, teachers should choose a task based on student interests, background knowledge, and needs. The teacher should also review the tasks to ascertain which one best fits with their specific classroom environments and scheduling. For instance, some tasks may be more appropriate for a pull-out class, while others may work better in the regular classroom.

It should also be noted that two or more students may collaborate in Phase I and/or Phase II, but when there is collaboration, each student’s individual learning must be documented.

When choosing a task, teachers may wish to consider these questions:

- Which task best meets the needs, interests, and motivations of my students?
- Which task can most effectively be integrated into the existing curriculum?
- Which task is feasible for the G/T program design?
- Which task can be differentiated to meet the needs of all learners so that they benefit from participation?
- Which task best utilizes existing school and community materials and resources?

**Suggestions for Supporting Students**

Some of the supports that teachers provide for students working on TPSP projects include the following activities:

- determining criteria for selecting a task;
- informing students of project guidelines, requirements, and scoring criteria;
- providing the introductory and ongoing instruction necessary for students to succeed in the project;
- coaching students throughout the duration of the project;
- locating necessary resources to support learning and research experiences;
- assessing student progress periodically and providing final assessments of student projects; and
- certifying that the project is the student’s own work.

**Research process**

One of the most commonly reported challenges in supporting G/T students participating in the TPSP is lack of student research skills and limited experience with the research process.

The research process should consist of the following steps:

- identifying and defining the research problem or question;
- reviewing the existing evidence;
- refining the research question(s);
- developing a research design and proposal;
- carrying out the research design;
- analyzing the results; and
- reporting the findings through a product or performance.

The TPSP **Continuum of Learning Experiences Framework (COLEF)** charts for each grade level were specifically designed to support teachers in developing their students’ research skills and guiding them through the research process with a focus on depth and complexity of learning. The charts are an essential resource for ensuring students do not have gaps or deficits in research skills. Without solid research skills, G/T students will not be able to meet the state goal for gifted learners.
The following steps are defined in the COLEFs in alignment with the relevant grade-level TEKS:

1. Develop a research plan
2. Develop and carry out a research design
3. Analyze and interpret results
4. Report findings through product/performance and presentation

The COLEFs are based on the revised English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) TEKS implemented in the 2009-2010 school year. The charts include grade-level ELAR TEKS and two grade levels beyond to ensure students have access to the skills necessary to conduct research at the appropriate level of readiness or to address the complexity of the problem, issue, topic, and/or questions being researched. The COLEFs also provide discipline-specific, inquiry-based TEKS in the additional foundation areas of mathematics, science, and social studies, so that teachers can target specific skills in the relevant content area of the task. Even though clusters of research skills are often similar and repeat across disciplines, looking at the skills in each content area adds specificity and authenticity to the research process.

In addition, the COLEFs include the relevant Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) aligned with each identified step in the research process. The CCRS are the “end of road” goal for all Texas public school students. They articulate expectations for the level of knowledge and skills students need to enter college without remediation and provide guidance for teachers in developing skills and traits necessary for success in post-secondary education and the workplace.

Each chart also references the six scoring dimensions from the TPSP assessments, which are discussed in the section that follows.

Before looking at tasks and COLEFs for a specific grade level, teachers might want to review the [Colef Overview Document](#), which summarizes and provides examples of depth and complexity as defined in the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students. For example, depth involves exploration of content within a discipline to include:

- analyzing from the concrete to the abstract, familiar to the unfamiliar, known to the unknown;
- exploring the discipline by going beyond facts and concepts into generalizations, principles, theories, laws; and
- investigating the layers of experience within a discipline through details, patterns, trends, unanswered questions, and/or ethical considerations.
Expectations and examples of complexity involve:

- extension of content in, between, and across disciplines through the study of themes, problems, and issues;
- seeing relationships between and among ideas in/within the topic, discipline, and disciplines; and
- examining relationships in, between, and across disciplines over time and from multiple points of view.

The COLEFs can be found under the Resources tab in the Instructional Tools menu on the TPSP website.

**Gifted/Talented Teacher Toolkit**

In preparing to teach advanced research skills, teachers might also want to review the Gifted/Talented Teacher Toolkit. This resource provides the following:

- research on learning theory and differentiated instruction;
- ideas for differentiating content for G/T students;
- detailed resources to support most of the steps for advanced product/performance development and quality research presentations; and
- research processes, methodology, and models of inquiry.

Teachers should investigate these and other resources to provide instruction to help students build their research skills. Possible supplementary lessons could be developed on the following specific topics:

- conducting research and surveys;
- asking guiding questions;
- developing computer skills;
- using library resources;
- using a variety of primary and secondary sources;
- writing a research proposal, paper, and bibliography; and
- developing tables, charts, and graphs.

**Organizational and time management support**

Teachers may also want to consider use of the following to support student work:

- using organizers or research journals;
- setting weekly goals and keeping records;
- conducting structured activities to reflect on and revisit project goals;
- developing calendars with deadlines and deliverables;
- holding individual student conferences; and
- implementing flexible grouping as appropriate.

**Documenting and synthesizing learning**

Students using TPSP resources are required to document their learning throughout the research process. One effective way for students to document their learning is with a journal. The journal will allow
students to review their experiences and findings from Phase I and apply them in Phase II. Teachers may wish to check student journals periodically to ensure that students are progressing appropriately. Students may wish to keep their research journals in a binder or spiral notebook. Teachers can reinforce the idea that documentation of learning is evidence of scholarly behavior. See the Sample Forms tab on the middle school TPSP webpage for examples of forms that students can use to document their learning, including recording research findings and documenting primary and secondary sources.

Teachers will also want to provide opportunities for students to synthesize their learning throughout the project. Teachers can schedule individual and peer conferences and use questioning and coaching techniques to elicit student syntheses of learning and progress. Other ways to help students synthesize their learning include the following:

- modeling a mid-course professional presentation;
- conducting ongoing evaluations with the scoring dimensions; and
- providing time for peers to offer suggestions and ideas.

**Academic integrity**

Finally, the teacher is responsible for ensuring that student work is original and demonstrates academic integrity. To uphold high ethical standards, student work should include the following:

- accurate and reliable documentation;
- full acknowledgement of the ideas and words of another person;
- clear and precise references;
- complete biographical listing of all works cited;
- appropriate releases for copyrighted materials, including videotape footage, audio recordings, and photographs, if use extends beyond fair use guidelines; and
- appropriate releases for using images of other students.
TPSP Assessments

Assessment Design

The TPSP provides assessment rubrics for each school level that were developed by experts in G/T education. The Middle School Grade Level TPSP Assessment Rubric can be accessed under the Middle School tab on the TPSP homepage. Assessments for the TPSP are aligned instruments designed to measure real-world skills and knowledge presented in TPSP tasks. The assessments are not focused narrowly on a final product/performance, but, rather, move students toward expertise through a continuum of proficiency. The assessments are intended to be used to promote student and teacher collaboration and to document student growth and depth of understanding. A critical activity in identifying appropriate TPSP tasks and planning for TPSP implementation is to review the assessment rubric to develop an instructional plan with aligned instructional goals.

Scoring dimensions

TPSP scoring dimensions set the standards for what students can do with the knowledge and skills presented in TPSP tasks. At the middle school level, six scoring dimensions provide the basis for student work and for scoring of projects in the following areas:

1. Content Knowledge and Skills—the key facts, concepts, principles, skills, themes, and methods of inquiry of a discipline.
2. Analysis and Synthesis—advanced thinking processes that enable students to make connections across time, disciplines, locations, and cultures.
3. Multiple Perspectives—the consideration of other, diverse points of view.
4. Research—the inquiry process used in the discipline.
5. Communication—the use of appropriate written, spoken, and technological media to convey new learning in the discipline.
6. Presentation of Learning—the coherence of a student’s presentation of new learning, including evidence of planning and reasoning.

Depth and complexity

For each scoring dimension, students must be able to demonstrate discipline-specific depth and complexity. Each scoring dimension includes all or some of the following:

- Details – distinguishing attributes, features, specific defining elements
- Big Ideas – key concepts and generalizations
- Language of the Discipline – tools and language a member of the discipline uses
- Rules – methods of inquiry
- Patterns – reoccurring or repeating events, elements, or ideas; making predictions; order of events
• Trends – ongoing influencing and/or contributing factors
• Unanswered Questions – what is unknown or not understood about an area of study and/or incomplete information or explanation
• Different Perspectives – opposing viewpoints and/or how different individuals and groups see a situation
• Ethics – dilemmas, controversies, bias, prejudice, and/or discrimination
• Over Time – relationship between past, present, and future
• Interdisciplinary Relationships – common elements from different disciplines to add meaning to an idea

Activity focus
The scoring dimensions and depth and complexity expectations for the grade level are embedded in the following activity focus areas for assessment:

I. Developing and implementing a Research Plan
   A. Development of questions
   B. Research methodology
   C. Sources of information
   D. Collection of data
   E. Analysis and interpretation of data
   F. Multiple perspectives

II. Presentation of Learning
   A. Organization
   B. Depth of understanding
   C. Impact
   D. Delivery
   E. Vocabulary of disciplinarian

The presentation of learning through product/performance and communication combine to produce a mirror that reflects the entire research process resulting from a carefully developed and implemented research plan.

Proficiency descriptors
The rubric provides proficiency descriptors at each of the following levels: expert, practitioner, apprentice, and novice. The descriptors describe a process of growth and development in student
work in each of the focus areas for assessment. It is important to remember that a gifted learner can be a novice in one area and an expert in another. The purpose of the assessment rubric is to assist the student in ascending the level of intellectual demand on his/her way to becoming an expert.

The proficiency levels in the rubrics are defined as follows:

- **Novice** – amateur or new to knowledge and skills defined by TPSP scoring dimensions and/or grade-level TEKS
- **Apprentice** – acquiring knowledge and skills defined by TPSP scoring dimensions and achieving minimal grade-level TEKS student expectations
- **Practitioner** – practicing knowledge and skills defined by TPSP scoring dimensions and grade-level student expectations
- **Expert** – skillful manipulation of knowledge and skills defined by TPSP scoring dimensions and grade-level or beyond TEKS student expectations

Using the middle school assessment rubric and the COLEFs, teachers can develop questions to support assessment activities and determine if students are demonstrating depth and complexity of learning. The "A Suggested Scaffolding of Research Skills" document, which can be accessed through the Gifted/Talented Teacher Toolkit, provides examples of how teachers can develop questions for determining the student’s level of proficiency and for moving the student toward a higher level of proficiency. Because the TPSP at the middle school level is very teacher guided, the questions can be a useful tool when the teacher prepares the learning experiences for student participation and guides student activities.

**Suggestions for Using Assessments**

Students and teachers should use the Middle School Grade Level TPSP Assessment Rubric to guide the overall development of the project, ongoing formative assessment, and summative assessment.
Teachers should review the rubrics when selecting tasks and designing an overall plan for G/T instruction. Integrated review of the tasks, assessments, and COLEFs for the specific grade level will help teachers develop coherent, high quality instructional plans. Use of the COLEF in concert with the assessment is particularly helpful in identifying specific grade-level expectations.

As tasks are introduced, students and teachers should review the assessment rubric together to provide understanding of the goals for student work. Subsequently, at regular intervals throughout the project, students and teachers can use the rubric to evaluate student progress and work for formative assessment and to revise plans as necessary. The rubric includes an accompanying assessment documentation chart that provides space for recording highlights, recommendations, and additional comments for three formative or in-process assessments. After each stage of assessment, teachers and students can identify opportunities to revisit, revise, and redo and allow the practice of skills to increase proficiency levels. Movement from emphasis on final scoring to assessing for growth over time will ensure students produce products and/or performances that do not fall short of meeting the advanced level and/or professional expectations put forth in the state plan. Though teachers and students should use the scoring dimensions to measure progress, the dimensions were not meant to be a way to assign grades. Teachers should consider all aspects of student work and progress when determining classroom grades.

Contact your regional education service center to find out about additional training in assessment for G/T students using TPSP and TEA resources.

Sample Forms

The middle school level sample forms on the TPSP website were developed by teachers and staff from some of the original pilot sites to support TPSP project implementation. These forms can be adapted and used as needed for TPSP implementation. They are identified on the website by the appropriate audience for the form (parent, student, teacher, mentor) and are organized by timeframe:

- beginning of a project;
- during the research process; and
- for final presentations.

Note that some sample forms are attached to tasks as appropriate.

Tips for using the sample forms include the following:

- Review the sample forms as you prepare to teach a task to pre-plan needs for communicating with parents, obtaining permissions, providing instructions.
- Use the forms as a template and adapt as appropriate to your specific needs.
- If there are potential policy issues/permissions, ask an appropriate district/campus staff person to review your final form.
- Where appropriate, use campus/district letterhead.
Sample Student Projects

For each school level, the TPSP includes a sample of student work that provides an example completed product/performance associated with a selected task for the level. At the middle school level, the TPSP website provides a student work sample from a grade 8 task.

Teachers new to the project can use the samples to get a tangible idea of what student work might look like and practice evaluating projects using assessment rubrics.

Other Resources

Other resources provided on the TPSP website, which may be useful for teachers, include the following.

Promotional Items

The TPSP provides informational documents for parents and other stakeholders that can be used to support project implementation such as:

- project brochures and information;
- parent brochures in English and Spanish;
- G/T education promotional postcards; and
- G/T education promotional poster sets.

Evaluation Reports

An evaluation of the TPSP at the original pilot project sites was designed to identify possible program impacts. The evaluation objectives were to document student and program-level outcomes related to participation and provide illustrative stories of implementation at the student, teacher, and program level. Findings based on comparisons between students in participating programs and students in a control group from schools that did not participate in TPSP showed no differences in state test performance or attendance. However, students from schools that had participated for three years were significantly more likely to enroll in Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses than students from non-participating schools. Further, most survey respondents agreed that participation in the TPSP had resulted in improvements in school or district G/T services overall and specifically in terms of the following:

- teacher professional growth,
- teacher comfort with G/T students,
- teacher ability to differentiate curriculum for G/T students; and
- sophistication of G/T student products and/or performances.
Administrator Tools

The website provides tools for administrators, including administrative considerations for planning TPSP programming in terms of budget, scheduling, and curricular strategies as well as principles of a differentiated curriculum for G/T students. To support administrators in evaluating the effectiveness of instruction in G/T classrooms, the site also provides a Walkthrough for Administrators instrument. The descriptors and guiding questions in the instrument are aligned with the other TPSP resources and are based on the six scoring dimensions used to evaluate a student’s final research product/performance at the middle school level of the TPSP.

Instructional Strategies

The TPSP also provides some information on instructional strategies to help gifted students maximize their educational opportunities. These strategies are especially important in structuring programs for G/T students that enable them to meet the state goal—the development of innovative products and performances. Some of the strategies discussed include:

- curriculum compacting
- tiered assignments
- flexible groups

Visit the Instructional Strategies page on the website for more information.

Final Planning Considerations and Training

Before introducing the TPSP to students, teachers will want to become familiar with all the resources described above to have a better understanding of how the TPSP will unfold in their individual classrooms. To prepare for implementation, teachers may wish to complete the following:

- review tasks, assessments, and the COLEF for the grade level;
- procure or locate necessary supplies and materials;
- construct a plan for helping students to develop research skills;
- look at the guiding questions of the task and make any necessary adjustments; and
- develop a calendar with deadlines and deliverables.

Also remember that the local community contains a wealth of resources that students can use while conducting research. In planning for TPSP implementation, consider additional resources for student support such as local businesses, museums, colleges and universities, and libraries.

Teachers will also want to investigate TPSP-related professional development. Check with your regional education service center to find out about the following trainings:

- Assessing for Growth
- Roadmap for Successful TPSP Implementation