



The Anderson School

NEWSLETTER

A publication of the Anderson Private School for the Gifted & Talented
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PERSPECTIVES

of DR. & MRS. ANDERSON

The characteristics that are typically found in bright, creative children are the same ones that bring them into conflict with school teachers and school rules. Highly creative, intelligent children are usually outspoken, demonstrative, energetic and very active - physically, mentally and emotionally. They exhibit behaviors that are not teacher-pleasing. They are NOT interested in sitting still and patiently being quiet hour after hour, while a teacher drills and reviews material that he or she already is all too familiar with and is several years below an appropriate level of functioning.

The characteristics that gifted children typically exhibit are the very ones that make highly successful and dynamic adult leaders in industry, business, government or commerce. Instead of forcing children into a behavioral mold in the name of conformity (and ostensibly to make the job of teaching easier), let us focus upon nurturing and developing these characteristics and abilities. Gifted children want to be appreciated for their innate curiosity, creativity and proclivity toward an active life style. Provided with freedom, opportunity and encouragement, they can flourish and blossom into dynamic,

vivacious and energetic individuals with the self-confidence and skills to accomplish anything.

However, left to struggle with the apathy and complacency of typical educational environments or forced into a confining regiment of artificial structure, they may justifiably rebel or withdraw and not survive at all. The sparkle of their colorful personality, ferocious curiosity, dynamic energy and everlasting optimism may dim in the dark confines of misguided academic pursuit.

"The characteristics that gifted children typically exhibit are the very ones that make highly successful and dynamic adult leaders . . ."

The children we depend upon to lift our own spirits and make us feel proud may simply vanish into the murky waters of compliance, acceptability and obedience to the will of those whose spirits may already be deceased.

- The whole art of teaching is only the art of awakening the natural curiosity of a young mind for the purpose of satisfying it afterwards. -

(Anatole France)

IMPORTANT DATES

Sept. 1 First Day of School
Sept. 7 Labor Day Holiday
Oct. 5-9 Trip to McDonald Observatory
Oct. 12 Columbus Day Holiday
Nov. 23-27 Thanksgiving/Fall Break
Dec. 9-11 Inservice (T.A.G.T. Conf.)

- Always do right. This will gratify some people, and astonish the rest. -
(Mark Twain)

GIRLS CAREERS THE FOCUS AT T.W.U.

Our middle school girls, accompanied Mrs. Anderson, participated in the Expanding Your Horizons conference sponsored by Texas Wesleyan University. The focus was on learning about careers traditionally occupied by men. At this girls career workshop, we heard from female professionals in more than thirty science and math related fields, which ranged from paleontology, chemistry and Botany to Architecture, Medicine and Finance.

The conference proved to be a wonderful opportunity to become introduced to women's role models and specific career opportunities.

- No matter how far you have gone on a wrong road, turn back. -
(Turkish proverb)

ADVENTURE IS IN EXPEDITION

Our curriculum calls for an adventure trip each year. And this Spring found us southbound for Houston and Galveston.

We were accompanied by several parents as we spent the first afternoon touring N.A.S.A. and viewing the exhibits. Later we drove to Galveston to check in at the motel, take a walk on the beach and go for a swim.

The next morning we awoke early for a ranger-guided beach tour at Galveston Island State Park, followed by a drive to the Kemah shrimp docks for lunch and shopping at the picturesque Strand.

The afternoon found us at the Texas Seaport Museum, home of the Elissa - a 400-ton cargo sailing ship built in Scotland in 1877 (a fine example of 19th century maritime technology) and aboard the Ocean Star Drilling Rig. The scavenger hunt and movie aboard the ship were memorable events for all.

On day three we ventured to the Railroad Museum and experienced Mediterranean cuisine for lunch. We passed the afternoon back at the Strand and on the beach looking for blue crabs, sand dollars and other treasures.

Our sincere gratitude goes to Nancy Marchant for planning and coordinating this wonderful learning opportunity. And a special thank you to our mentor and dear friend, Frank Adams, for his many contributions, wisdom and guidance. We love you, Frank !

- One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child. -

(Carl Jung)

HOW WE DIFFER

FROM OTHER SCHOOLS [PART 9]

One of the key philosophical differences found at the Anderson School relates to our attitude toward "assessment." An incalculable waste of precious talent and childhood is now being permitted in the name of accountability. Millions of children across our vast state are paying a high price so that every child in every classroom can be drilled until *minimum* skills are mastered. Our misguided and narrow-minded legislators have effectively squelched any real opportunities able children have had to flourish. And they have turned capable teachers into virtual automatons. Robotic reviews of minimum skills curriculums have forced teachers to ignore the viable needs and necessary nurturing that gifted children must have in order to thrive. Many are now dying on the vine. And some are already dead.

These precious children have been ignored to the point where many have intellectually, emotionally or physically perished. And, to our shame, they are typically six to sixteen years old.

The enormity of this wasteful tragedy will not be felt until this generation has passed through the valley of the shadow of neglect. Only then will we, as a people, realize what we have done to children with the innate capability and potential to make enormous contributions to our society. Only then will twentieth century Rome begin to crumble and America will miss the opportunity to maintain the leadership it has provided to the world as a result of its gifted leaders.

- Successful is the person who has lived well, laughed often and loved much, who has gained the respect of children, who leaves the world better than they found it, who has never lacked for appreciation for the earth's beauty, who never fails to look for the best in others or give the best of themselves. -

MRS. ANDERSON IS GUEST SPEAKER

For My Children, a parent and professional's networking group for those who seek successful treatments for ADHD without using the controlled substance, Ritalin, and other drugs, recently invited Mrs. Anderson to present information about the Anderson School and its philosophy of education.

Dr. Mary Ann Block, noted physician and author, invited Mrs. Anderson to address the large gathering and inform them of our alternative instructional and motivational strategies. The Anderson School adheres to a policy which prohibits the use of such drugs by its students.

Our sincere gratitude goes to Dr. Block for the invitation to address this unique gathering and for her remarkable work which enables parents and their children to discover viable alternatives to drug therapy. Dr. Block is the author of No More Ritalin, which is available in area bookstores.

- If we don't change the direction we're going, we're likely to end up where we are headed. -

(Chinese proverb)

ANIMAL FRIENDS

It is important for each of our students to have at least one animal friend at school. And new additions to our petting zoo, aviary and indoor collections have arrived. Our dear friend, John Hammons, was kind enough to bring a new Cockateel and several beautiful white doves (one baby has already emerged from its egg). And Alex Anderson is proud of his new baby runners (ducks) that arrived from the Cackle Hatchery.

- With a sweet tongue and kindness, you can drag an elephant by a hair. -

(Persian Proverb)