

Motivational Video for State Testing

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following vignette describes a way to use different types of technology with gifted students. The students' grades ranged from three through six in a school district. Gifted students used a variety of skills—leadership, creativity, performing arts, and technology—to develop a motivational video. The video was designed to be used to generate excitement for upcoming state assessment. The building administrator suggested the project, and the gifted students were engaged in almost all stages of production. From development to the final production, the students were engaged. Students used iPhones, iMovie, and a MAC computer to develop their product and produced a video to motivate fellow students.

SETTING THE STAGE

It was getting close to the time of the year, when teachers and building administrators are starting to think of ways to really motivate students for state testing, and my school in eastern Kentucky was no different. In hopes to inspire the faculty and staff, the principal emailed everyone a few YouTube videos. The videos were created by schools in order to pump up their students for their testing. They were all very well put together and as a teacher, I was impressed with the videos. While some of the videos were extremely over the top, others kept it simple. All in all, I was impressed with all of them. I was then shocked the next day when I was surprised with a request from the principal. After watching the videos multiple times,

the principal had been inspired to have a motivational video made for our students to pump up the excitement and enthusiasm for our yearly state test. The catch, my gifted and talented kids are in charge of creating the video. Watch out Hollywood, this gifted teacher is headed your way.

We are a small, independent school district in what is a semi-rural part of eastern Kentucky. Approximately forty percent of our students are on Free or Reduced lunch. The district is divided into three buildings; K-3rd, 4th-6th, and 7th-12th. As the newly appointed gifted and talented teacher in the district, I provide instruction for the 4th, 5th, and 6th graders every Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. This is a pull-out program, meaning students are taken from their regular classroom and brought to my classroom for enriched instruction. There are approximately 222 students in the 4th-6th grade building. Each week I work with thirty-eight of those students.

These thirty-eight students have been identified as gifted in at least one of five areas: leadership, creative thought, visual and performing arts, specific academic area, and/or overall intellectual ability. In Kentucky, students are formally identified as gifted in the fourth grade. To be placed in our district gifted program, students must be in the 98th percentile and be given a Distinguished on their yearly state test. They must also have the recommendation of their teachers. Students who have been identified for general intelligence scored within the 98th percentile on the Raven Intelligence Test and have been recommended for the gifted program by their classroom teacher. To identify students for music, art, dance, or drama, students must bring in documentation of their skills from a studio teacher or instructor. They need a recommendation from someone who is skilled in the area of visual or performing arts. If it appears that a student might be gifted in this area, I can contact professionals to request a recommendation for the student.

Prior to fourth grade, students who appear to have high potential for giftedness are placed in the primary talent pool. Approximately twenty five percent of the kindergarten through third grade students is expected to be in the talent pool. However, due to uneven developmental stages, at the end of third grade or beginning of fourth grade, Kentucky schools formally identify students as gifted and talented. In Kentucky, a Gifted Student Service Plan (GSSP) is created for students. This plan outlines how the school system will address the needs of the gifted student in the classroom. Not every child in the talent pool will qualify for the gifted program.

In my school system, my role as a gifted teacher means that I work with a large number of students. It was the fourth through sixth graders in one of my gifted pull out classes that was requested to create the motivational video for our school. Within this group, eight of the students were in fourth grade, twenty-two were in fifth grade, and eight were sixth graders. The gender composition was skewed towards girls. This group was composed of eleven boys and twenty-seven girls. Only one student was identified as a twice-exceptional child, meaning that this student needed

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