



Gifted education opportunities
for children, parents and teachers

Thinking Ahead Newsletter January 2011

Happy New Year!

Christmas and New Year have come and gone and summer is definitely here. I hope you have enjoyed the break however long or short it was, and are looking forward to the coming year. I made the most of a few quiet days after Christmas to dive into some creative activities and also some reading while I had the space to think and plan. I can recommend *The Brain that Changes Itself* if you are looking for something that impacts on everyone's life in some way.

I will be back at work later this week answering the stack of emails and queries that are waiting. The holiday programs will run the following week and then it isn't long until school starts again.

There will be another newsletter early in February with an update and more information about programs which will run during the year.

Holiday programs

Spaces still remain in many workshops so if you are thinking about it but have not yet registered please do very soon. Teachers begin preparations in earnest this week so if you can register by Wednesday 12th at the latest we would appreciate it so they know how many to prepare for. Where places are limited (or classes are full) it is indicated on the Program page of the website so check there to see where spaces remain. <http://www.thinkingahead.com.au/program.htm>
You will also find the links to the Registration Form from here.

A confirmation email will be sent out on Tuesday this week to everyone who has registered. If you don't hear from me, please check the copy you printed of the Registration (the window which opened after you submitted the form) to make sure you have submitted the correct email address as this is where your confirmation will be sent.

Gifted Children: Resources for Parents and Teachers in WA

I finally received copies of the updated Resource Book a couple of days before Christmas and all those who had pre-ordered or reserved copies should have received them just before or after Christmas depending on mail deliveries. If you want to find out more about this book which is packed with useful information go to http://www.thinkingahead.com.au/wa_resource_book.htm. To order a copy go to the order form at http://www.thinkingahead.com.au/order_resources.htm. Cost is \$32.50, postage to a WA address is \$5. Some copies will be available for purchase at the Holiday Workshops next week.

Tutor bank

I am asked regularly throughout the year if I can suggest possible tutors for various areas but often haven't had many suggestions. I am in the process of compiling a list of potential tutors which can then be made available to parents.

If you are interested in possibly tutoring a child with either a talent or passion in a particular area or working with a gifted child with learning difficulties (or differences), please let me know. Send me your name, subject area or skill and your preferred method of contact (phone or email

address). Any arrangements would be made directly between the tutor and family, I will only be acting as a collection point for information.

Parents who have found a tutor they would recommend are also welcome to forward me the information.

Over excitabilities and Intensity

This is a topic which comes up often in consultations and queries from parents. The end of the school year, followed closely by Christmas is often a time when over excitabilities make life a little more of a challenge. A family with gifted children is very likely to also include gifted adults, many of whom will also experience the sensitivities, intensity and over excitabilities in various forms. As stress tends to make them more challenging to manage, life can be tricky. One parent emailed recently lamenting the fact that it had been a day of 'melt downs'.

There is some good basic information about over excitabilities available on the internet (a number of links are included in the Resource Book) but a few other articles and blog postings have come to light just recently which you might also like to read.

- **Helping children learn to manage stress** This article from the Everyday Intensity blog is worth reading <http://everydayintensity.com/2010/11/22/just-a-thought/>
- **In Defence of Intense** - Don't be put off by the URL of this website or the title of the blog. This article is worth a read and includes a useful hint which parents might like to pass on to their Intense children - the superhero log. <http://crazysexylife.com/2010/in-defense-of-intense/>
- The next **SENGinar** will be on Jan 31st (the morning of Feb 1 our time) and the topic is **Overexcitabilities**. It will be presented by Susan Daniels, the author of Living with Intensity (an excellent read). Go to the SENG website for more info www.instantpresenter.com/AccountManager/RegEv.aspx?PIID=E951D887854D
- And although Christmas is now behind us, you might also like to read this article about a sensory sensitive Santa in the US and an opportunity for autistic kids to participate. I am sure many other sensitive kids would have also enjoyed this opportunity! http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2010/12/sensitive_santa_greets_childre.html

Other News

The **Harry P and the Professors** returns to the West with a new program for their second camp organised by Helen Dudeney from Australian Gifted Support.

Join the Professors for 2 days of fun and exciting activities based on J K Rowling's Harry Potter Series. We will have a wide range of activities, workshops, games and exploration time. Classes will include potions, care of magical creatures, herbology and more. Enjoy the inter-house competition and a game of Quiddich. Activities will require your creative, imaginative, scientific and problem solving skills. Extensive knowledge of the books not essential. Novice and highly experienced Hogwarts students all welcome. This is an all new program so those who attended in 2010 can come along for a new range of challenges and fun.

The camp will run from 7.30pm on Friday April 15th until 3pm Sunday 17th April at Holiday Haven Grassroots campsite in Jarrahdale, about 45 mins from central Perth. Bookings close April 7th but to take advantage of the early bird discount you need to register by March 1st. Be sure to mention that you are on the Thinking Ahead mailing list as this also qualifies you for a discount. More details can be found at <http://www.australiangiftedsupport.com/gpage12.html>

World Gifted Conference 2011 – there has been a *change of venue city*. The World Council for Gifted and Talented Children has published the following update on the coming World Conference

The unforeseen political circumstances which have arisen in South Korea have necessitated the Executive Committee of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC) to make a very difficult decision. In consideration of the safety of our conference participants, it has become necessary to find a new location for the 19th World Conference. We are extremely pleased to announce that the conference has been moved to Prague, the Czech Republic, a beautiful, historic city in Eastern Europe. The 19th World Conference will take place in Prague (August 8-12, 2011). More details about the conference will be announced soon. We are very sorry for any inconvenience this causes you. Please contact our new headquarters in Bowling Green, in January with any problems. Also, please watch our web-site for more information. WCGTC <https://world-gifted.org/>

Holiday Reading and links to other information which may be of interest

TEDx Melbourne - Community and Youth was held in November 2010 . check the website for details on how to access the talks. www.tedxmelbourne.com/

On Giftedness

- **Understanding what giftedness is and what it is not** James Delisle http://www.giftedteam.org/pdf/links/Understand_What_Giftedness_Is_and_What_It_Is_Not-Delisle.pdf
- **Underachievement and the Quest for Dignity** in *Understanding our Gifted* www.thinkingahead.com.au/downloads.htm
- More reading – a good list from American Mensa www.us.mensa.org/Content/AML/NavigationMenu/Programs/GiftedYouth/BookList/Gifted_Children_s_Bo.htm

Books for kids

- **Good Books for Kids** – a searchable collection of titles organised by age group. www.booksforkids-reviews.com/

Holiday activities

- **Smarter Puzzles** <http://www.smarterpuzzles.com.au/>
- **The Art of Conversation** – a card game providing conversation topics www.taoc.com.au

Maths

- For another view on what is important in maths have a look at this **TED talk** by Arthur Benjamin. This short (3 minute) talk outlines his formula for changing maths education as he believes it is time for maths to change from analogue to digital - to the maths of uncertainty, randomness, data prob and statistics (instead of on calculus). He outlines why he thinks it would be more use if all students knew what 2 standard deviations from the Mean meant. http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/arthur_benjamin_s_formula_for_changing_math_education.html
- **Fractal Extreme** software - a free trial is available from <http://cygnus-software.com/>

Reading

- **The Dolch Kit** site will be of interest to parents to children beginning to read. It includes lists of words of increasing difficulty along with a range of games and activities to reinforce the learning in a fun way. www.theschoolbell.com/Links/Dolch/Contents.html

Science

- **Interactive Anatomy.** This site was suggested by a parent. It includes 6 virtual tours of the human body from different sources. <http://m.makeuseof.com/tag/6-virtual-tours-human-body-free-interactive-anatomy-lessons/>
- **EdHeads** - helps students learn through educational games and activities. This website allows you (or your kids!) to take the role of doctors performing surgery. There are other virtual activities as well. A worthwhile site to visit for kids who have any interest in medicine. www.edheads.org

Society and Environment

- Living History - **Clara's Kitchen** – a 91 year old great grandmother recounts history of the Depression years through cooking. A fun resource for kids interested in modern history and cooking. 24 videos in the series on YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OPQqH3YIHA&feature=channel>
- **SHOUT** - Living with the Land Shout invites educators and students to take an active role in global environmental issues <http://shoutlearning.org/>

For Teachers (and home schoolers)

- **Mensa for Kids Lesson Plans** – a collection of lesson plans suitable for gifted children http://www.mensaforkids.org/school_template.cfm?showPage=school_pt_resources.cfm

Consultations

I will be available again during 2011 for consultation appointments with families to assist with education planning, advocacy support and above level testing where appropriate. As I mentioned at the end of last year, 2011 will see the expansion of the consultation service with Tracy Taylor also available for consultations.

If you would like to make an appointment please email Derrin for more information or to make a booking either Derrin or Tracy.


Enjoy the rest of the holidays and all the best for the coming school year. This year for the first time since 1995 I won't be holding my breath when school goes back. Instead I will be wondering how my daughter is managing at school in Italy..... especially when she doesn't speak much Italian as yet!

Cheers

Derrin Cramer

Derrin Cramer. MEd Gifted and Talented, Dip Teach ECE, COGE

 PO Box 171, Como Western Australia 6952

 (08) 9474 4594

 (08) 9474 3462

www.thinkingahead.com.au

<http://derrin-thebrightside.blogspot.com/>