

T.A.R.G.E.T. Board Report
December 11, 2017

There are currently three middle school students and six elementary students in the Holden R-III T.A.R.G.E.T. program. T.A.R.G.E.T. classes are held every Tuesday. The middle school students meet for 2½ hours in the morning at the middle school library and elementary students meet for 2½ hours in the afternoon at the elementary library.

Numbers of students by grade are:

- 1 in grade 2
- 2 in grade 3
- 1 in grade 4
- 2 in grade 5
- 1 in grade 6
- 2 in grade 8

Students participate in activities that promote critical and creative thinking skills. Most activities focus on the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy - analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Activities include but are not limited to:

Team Challenges – Students work as a team to complete tasks. Some tasks are verbal tasks, some are building tasks, and some are moving tasks. While the tasks differ in nature, the solutions must all come quickly. Teammates often have only a few minutes to discuss their plan and several more to implement it. This teaches them to communicate quickly, effectively, and without conflict. Every task requires students to think creatively, cooperate with one another, and communicate clearly in order to complete the given task. Tasks also help develop fluent, flexible thinking.

Photo Search - Students are shown a copy of a famous photograph from history and presented questions they must answer about the people and event captured in the photo. Using clues such as automobiles, clothing styles, landscape, etc. from the photo students begin researching to answer the questions posed about the photograph.

Weighing In – Current events are often used to allow students to formulate and express their individual opinions about the event being discussed. (Gifted students often have a strong interest in and knowledge of current events.)

Solve It Yourself Mysteries – Students are read a short mystery story. Using clues from the story and testimonies of individuals in the story students must determine the perpetrator of the crime, how the crime was committed, and the motive. (This is a favorite.)

Red Herrings – Using only questions that can be answered by yes or no students must determine the “back story” from 1-3 brief statements read to them. (This is another favorite.)

Critical Thinking Lessons – A variety of lessons are used to help students develop critical thinking skills.

Logic Puzzles – Students work to solve different types of logic puzzles that include toothpick puzzles, coin puzzles, sequencing puzzles, etc.

The T.A.R.G.E.T. class also offers students the opportunity to study topics that are of interest to them. Students choose topics they personally want to study. They complete Action Plans to help guide their research. After students have gathered information about their topics of interest they must complete final products that incorporate what they have learned. Students then must present their final products to an audience. After presentations students reflect on their projects, including the presentations, and evaluate themselves. Von Wehmeyer will discuss topics currently being studied.

Sometimes Robyn chooses a group topic and students select subtopics on which to focus their research. Ashtyn Treece will discuss the elementary group project completed this year. Reagan Vance will discuss the ongoing group project the middle school students are attempting called T.A.R.G.E.T. Trading Venture.

Robyn tries to take the students on at least one field trip per year. Last year middle school students went to Body Worlds at Union Station and later in the spring elementary and middle school students went to the Pompeii exhibit at Union Station.