

T.A.R.G.E.T. Board Report October 8, 2018

There are currently three middle school students and five 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 in the middle school library, and elementary students meet for 2½ hours in the afternoon in Room #9 in the elementary building. Numbers of students by grade are:

- 1 in grade 3
- 3 in grade 4
- 1 in grade 5
- 2 in grade 6
- 1 in grade 7

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.

Word of the Week - Each week students are introduced to an unfamiliar vocabulary word. Most Words of the Week are taken from the SAT vocabulary list.

Atlas Search – Elementary students increase their knowledge of geography through activities requiring them to use an atlas.

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.

Sometimes a group topic is assigned, and students select subtopics on which to focus their research. Middle school students are currently working on “The Decades Through Music”. Students research popular music genres, most popular songs in those genres, bands, solo artists, methods of listening to music (radio, records, CD, etc.), famous music events, and national and world events that influenced the music of the two decades chosen by each student 1940-1990. Students listen to music from their two decades and compare it to the music of today.

Elementary students are currently working on an ABC book of things they view as being representative of the United States. Helena, high school foreign exchange student from Germany, will be invited to speak to the class. Students will cooperatively compose a list of questions they would like to ask her. At the conclusion of the visit students will present Helena the book they have made.

Students go on at least one educational field trip per year. Last year students took the historic Independence wagon tour. Students also toured the Bingham-Waggoner Estate. The Clinton Soda Fountain where Harry Truman worked as a young man was a highlight of the trip. Trips in previous years include: WWI Museum, Truman Library, the Pompeii Exhibit, Body Worlds Exhibit, the courthouse in Kansas City to observe a criminal trial and a civil case, presentation by NASA astronaut at U.C.M., Kauffman Center for Performing Arts to hear a presenter from NASA’s propulsion lab.