

# **PLC/Book Study Guide for *Understanding and Using the Naglieri General Ability Tests***

**Dina M. Brulles, Ph.D., Kimberly Lansdowne, Ph.D.,  
and Jack A. Naglieri, Ph.D.**

This study guide is designed as a professional development resource to support those leading a book study, teacher workshop, or working group of *Understanding and Using the Naglieri General Ability Tests: A Call for Equity in Gifted Education*. Facilitator notes are provided for additional support and explanation in planning and facilitating your study sessions. We recommend that the facilitator read the entire guide and the book before beginning the study.

For each session, participants will be asked to read one or more chapters of the book, depending on the designated duration of the study. The pacing of the book study may be influenced by your testing schedule. Your team may decide to prioritize any one of the three parts of the book: *Measuring General Ability*, *Administering and Interpreting Ability Tests*, or *Instructional Approaches*.

Participants may also be asked to prepare something prior to attending a session, which may be determined by the group facilitator. Each chapter description includes guiding questions and suggested tasks that can be used as group activities during the session. This preparation work is noted at the beginning of each session description. Prior to leaving each session, look ahead to the next session to review and clarify what must be done before the next meeting. Reach agreements if suggested tasks need to be adjusted or modified.



# Introduction

## To be completed before the first session:

- Read the book's introduction.
- Consider the challenges you have faced identifying and serving underrepresented gifted learners in your school or school district.
- Carefully review the descriptions of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as noted in the section "DEI in Gifted Identification and Programming" on page 1.

**Facilitator Note:** *At this first meeting, listen to participants' questions and concerns about the timing of the book study with regard to practical and immediate needs based on the scheduling and preparation of the test administration. Consider assigning someone to take notes during the session. At the beginning of each session, you can review notes from the previous meeting and invite participants to share their experiences, thoughts, or questions. You may also create a shared digital space where participants can add their thoughts prior to the meeting to drive this review.*

## Discussion Questions:

1. Individually: Reflect on the terms *diversity*, *equity*, and *inclusion* within the context of gifted education as defined in the introduction (page 1).
2. As a group:
  - a. Discuss your initial thoughts after reading the introduction.
  - b. Share your thoughts about how DEI is implemented in your school or school district.
  - c. Discuss the authors' assertions regarding the influence of language and knowledge traditionally used in gifted identification.

# Chapter 1

## The Elephant in the Room

### To be completed before the chapter 1 session:

- Read chapter 1, beginning on page 8.
- Consider how diversity, equity, and inclusion as related to gifted education are influenced by the ways gifted students, especially historically underserved populations, are identified. Examine how your school or district identifies gifted students and see if the gifted population reflects the composition of the district as a whole.
- Identify the distinction between gifted students who qualify for services and talented students who can be served in the regular classroom.
- Prepare to discuss the role intelligence tests' content has on which students are identified. Consider the number of gifted students missed vis-à-vis the tests typically used for identification and the implications of this.
- Consider the key question about identification: Should a test of intellectual ability measure how well a student can think or what they know? Prepare to discuss how test items that vary across verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal content can all measure general ability. Identify the research that examines which tests are equitable and which are not.

### Discussion Questions:

1. What aspects of the intelligence tests typically used for gifted identification have blocked equitable representation of Black, Hispanic, and Native American students; students who are learning English; and students living in poverty?
2. How does the design of the Naglieri General Ability Tests: Verbal, Nonverbal, and Quantitative relate to equitable assessment?
3. What is the difference between test bias and test equity?
4. How can you tell if a test question is measuring a student's knowledge or their thinking?

# Chapter 2

## Ability Tests for Gifted Identification: Old and New Solutions

### To be completed before the chapter 2 session:

- Read chapter 2, beginning on page 17.
- Review the section “A Little History” (page 17), which describes the history of intelligence testing using verbal, nonverbal, and quantitative test content.
- Identify the value and limitations of measuring general ability using verbal, nonverbal, and quantitative test content and prepare to discuss.
- Select one topic in the chapter that is most important to you and prepare to discuss it with the group.

**Facilitator Note:** *It is important to carefully examine the section “Thinking and Knowing Continuum” on page 18 and consider the implications for fair and equitable identification of gifted students. Ensure that the group understands the difference between gifted (very smart) and talented (very knowledgeable) and the correspondence of this distinction to the different types of ability tests (gifted students are found using a test of thinking that is not confounded by knowledge and talented students are often identified by their high level of achievement and may or may not be gifted).*

### Discussion Questions:

1. Which tests typically used to identify gifted students favor talented students? How does this impact underrepresentation?
2. Which tests typically used to identify gifted students are not confounded by what a student knows? How can this impact underrepresentation?
3. How can oral instructions pose a barrier to identification for some students?
4. What does the summary of research of the differences in average scores by race and ethnicity suggest?

# Chapter 3

## Logistical Considerations

### To be completed before the chapter 3 session:

- Read chapter 3, beginning on page 32.
- Study the common tips for testing conditions (page 34) and consider *why* additional tips specific to gifted testing are listed.
- Review Figure 3.1: Common Accommodations and Solutions for the Naglieri General Ability Tests on page 37. Identify an accommodation and a solution that you have successfully implemented. Identify an accommodation and a solution that may be hard to implement in your current situation.
- Be prepared to discuss the following questions (*note: you may need to get information from your school or district gifted department*):
  - a. Who administers gifted identification testing in your school or district? What are the advantages of this? What challenges does it present, if any?
  - b. Are test scores shared with teachers? What are the advantages of this practice? What are the disadvantages?
- Carefully read the section “Test Prep Advice” on page 43. Formulate and be prepared to discuss your opinions on test prep specifically for gifted students.

### Discussion Questions:

1. What experiences have you had with students who have test anxiety? Describe strategies you use to help students overcome test anxiety.
2. Why is it important to keep testing conditions consistent? What suggestions from page 34 have you put into practice? What suggestions might you try?
3. How do the Naglieri General Ability Tests support specific groups:
  - a. English language learners?
  - b. Twice-exceptional students?
  - c. Culturally and ethnically diverse students?

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4. The pandemic has presented challenges for many students, but especially for students already experiencing a learning gap. What are some specific challenges faced by your students during online learning? What are possible solutions?

# Chapter 4 Understanding and Using Test Scores

## To be completed before the chapter 4 session:

- Read chapter 4, beginning on page 52.
- Study Figure 4.1: Testing Terms and Definitions on page 58 and become familiar with common terms used.
- Identify the benefits and challenges of using local norms.
- Based on the discussion in the chapter, prepare thoughts on using a screener for identification purposes. Consider how a screener impacts diversity, equity, and inclusion in gifted programs.
- Select one student scenario from your experience and prepare to discuss with the group. See pages 64–68 for sample scenarios.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Define universal testing. Why do districts use universal testing? Why do some districts choose not to use universal testing?
2. What are local norms and how can these be used in your school/district?
3. Why is it important to test many students when using local norms?



# Chapter 5 The Next Step: Achieving Equity in Gifted Programming

## To be completed before the chapter 5 session:

- Read chapter 5, beginning on page 72.
- Study the “Glossary of Terms for Diversity as Related to Gifted Programming” found on page 73. Prepare to share how you understand the terms relating to how your school or district supports gifted education.
- Consider the difference between high ability and high achievement as described by the authors. Prepare to discuss how this plays out in your school or district.
- Review Figure 5.3: Considerations for Equity in Gifted Programming Models on page 86. Identify which model most closely describes the services offered in your school or district and how it influences which students are identified and served.

## Activities and Discussion Questions:

1. Consider the “Glossary of Terms for Diversity as Related to Gifted Programming” on page 73. In which area(s) do you see the most challenge? Which of these seem easiest to address, and which are most urgent?
2. Discuss how requiring students with high ability to also have high achievement for participation in gifted programs adds to underrepresentation in gifted education.
3. How might you collaborate with district departments to support students with high ability who are not yet achieving highly?
4. What programming interventions would you suggest to mitigate the impact the service model may be having on the students who could be participating in the model but aren't?
5. Work through the teacher workshop activity on page 96 and discuss the reflection questions.

# Chapter 6 Culturally Responsive Approaches for Reaching and Teaching All Gifted Learners

## To be completed before the chapter 6 session:

- Read chapter 6, beginning on page 99.
- Select one topic to highlight with the group. Prepare to discuss why it was important to you.
- Examine what culturally responsive teaching looks like in the classroom. What are some examples of culturally relevant pedagogy that support this type of teaching?
- Consider how teachers' perspectives may influence their instruction. How might a strengths-based approach alter instruction? How might it impact students' self-perceptions? Plan to share your ideas with the group.

## Activities and Discussion Questions:

1. In the section "Learning About Your Students: A Starting Point" on page 110, the authors discuss the importance of building relationships with students. How can this practice help develop culturally responsive teaching?
2. What visuals, routines, or practices might you notice in a culturally responsive classroom?
3. What could culturally responsive teaching look like within the grade level and content area(s) you teach?

# About the Authors



**Dina Brulles, Ph.D.**, is the gifted program coordinator at Arizona State University and the former gifted education director at Paradise Valley Unified School District. She serves as governance secretary on the NAGC Board of Directors, and previously as NAGC's school district representative. Dina's work and publications center on increasing inclusion and building equity in gifted education programs and services using culturally responsive practices. Dina has authored numerous articles and chapters and coauthored books, including *A Teacher's Guide to Flexible Grouping and Collaborative*

*Learning; Designing Gifted Education Programs; The Cluster Grouping Handbook; Teaching Gifted Kids in Today's Classrooms; and Helping All Gifted Children Learn.*



**Kimberly Lansdowne, Ph.D.**, is the founding executive director of the Herberger Young Scholars Academy, a secondary school for highly gifted students at Arizona State University (ASU). She received her doctorate at ASU and has a lengthy career in teaching and administration at universities, colleges, public and private schools. At ASU, she develops and teaches undergraduate and graduate level education classes on curriculum, instruction, testing, measurement, and special needs. Previously, Kim was the director of gifted services at Scottsdale Unified School District, a gifted specialist, a middle

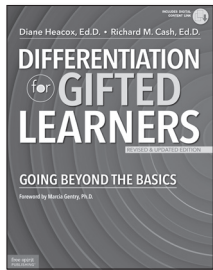
school math teacher, and an elementary general education teacher. She lives in Phoenix, Arizona.



**Jack A. Naglieri, Ph.D.**, has held faculty appointments at Northern Arizona University, The Ohio State University, and George Mason University. He is currently a research professor at the University of Virginia, senior research scientist at the Devereux Center for Resilient Children, and emeritus professor of psychology at George Mason University. Dr. Naglieri has developed many tests used by psychologists and educators such as the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, the Cognitive Assessment System, Autism Spectrum Rating Scale, Devereux Student Strength Assessment, and Comprehensive Executive

Function Inventory. He is widely known for his efforts to increase participation of traditionally underrepresented students in gifted education and remains an active presenter on related topics. Dr. Naglieri is committed to equitable and valid assessment through high-quality tests and rating scales and a continual effort to help professionals make positive differences in the lives of the students they evaluate. He lives near Washington, D.C.

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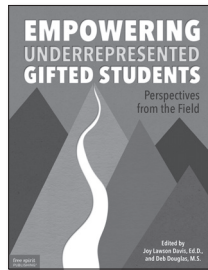


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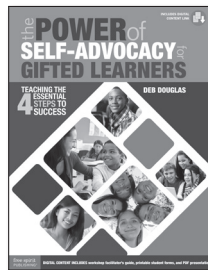
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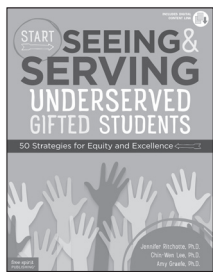


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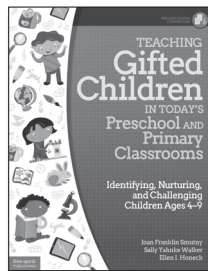


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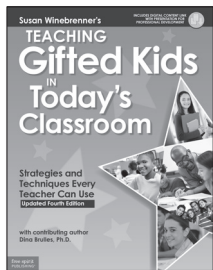
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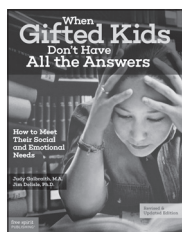
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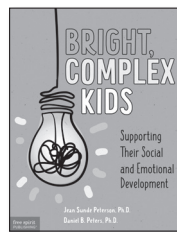


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