

The Autonomous Learner Model for Teaching and Learning

George Betts, Ed.D.
Professor of Special Education:
Area of Gifted & Talented
University of Northern Colorado
Greeley, CO 80639
970-351-1657
george.betts@unco.edu

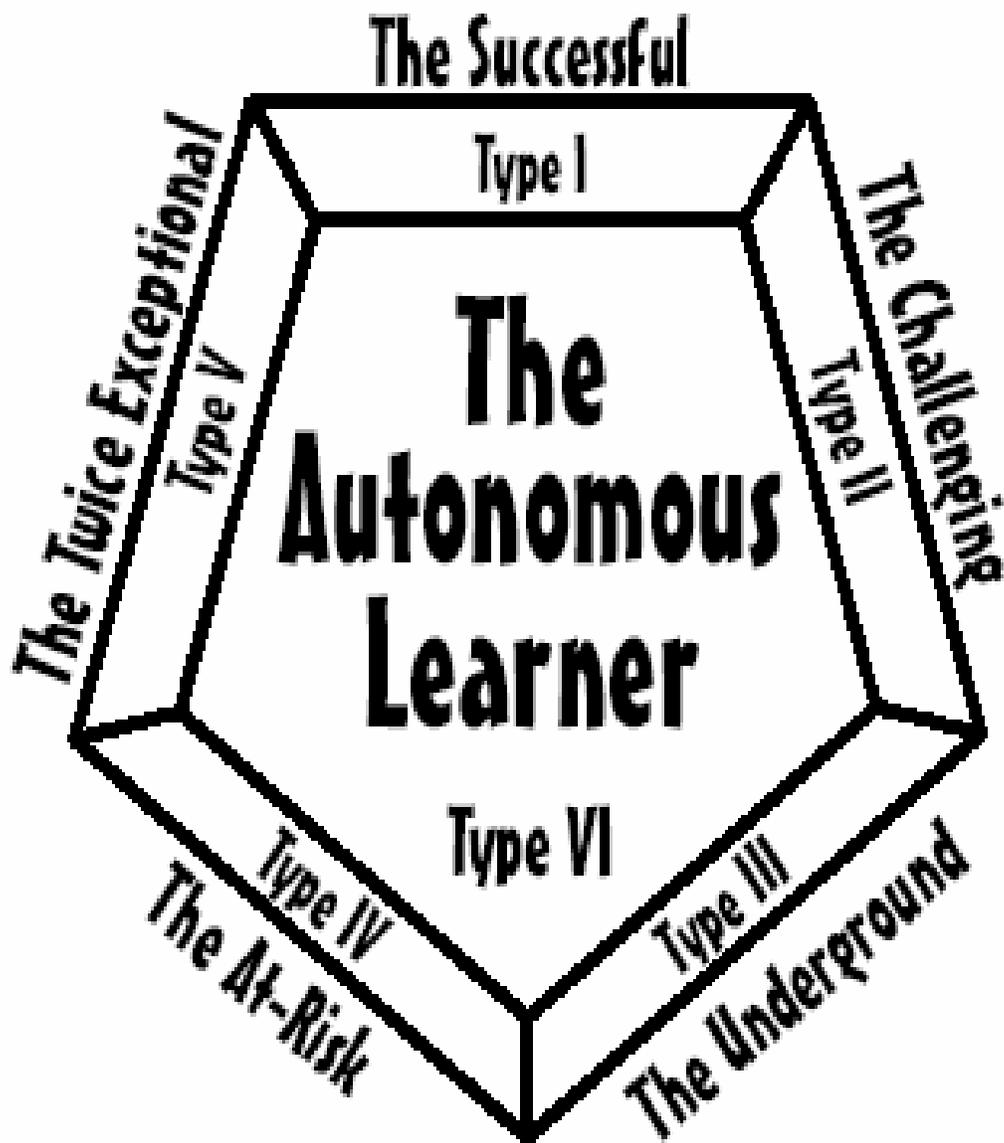
.

The Autonomous Learner Model

The Autonomous Learner Model for the Gifted and Talented (ALM) was developed specifically to meet the diversified cognitive, emotional, and social needs of learners

Profiles of Learners

- Type I The Successful
- Type II The Challenging
- Type III The Underground
- Type IV The At-risk
- Type V The Twice
Exceptional
- Type VI The Autonomous
Learner



Autonomous Learner Rating Scale for the Young Child

In each box there are squares next to responses. If the sentence is most like you color the square green. If the sentence is like you sometimes color the square yellow. If the sentence is not like you, color the square red. Next to the letter in each rectangle, write the number of green squares.

Name: _____

Date: _____

A _____



- I like myself
- I want to be successful
- I want others to like me
- I enjoy school
- I like good grades
- I like specific directions

C _____

- Others expect a lot from me
- Being different makes me uncomfortable
- I want to belong to a group
- I do not like to talk in front of people
- I like learning outside of school
- I don't like to show others that I am smart

E _____

- Some things are easy and some things are hard for me to learn
- It is hard for me to be successful in school
- Others see me as a failure for what I cannot do
- I get frustrated when I fail
- I am not successful without the help of others
- I want to make new friends

B _____

- I am highly creative
- I am bored with my class work
- I want others to listen to me
- I get frustrated when others don't understand me
- I want to be challenged
- Grades are not important to me

D _____

- I am angry with my world
- I don't like who I am
- People don't accept my friends or me
- I don't care about school
- I get in trouble for my actions
- I like to learn about things on my own

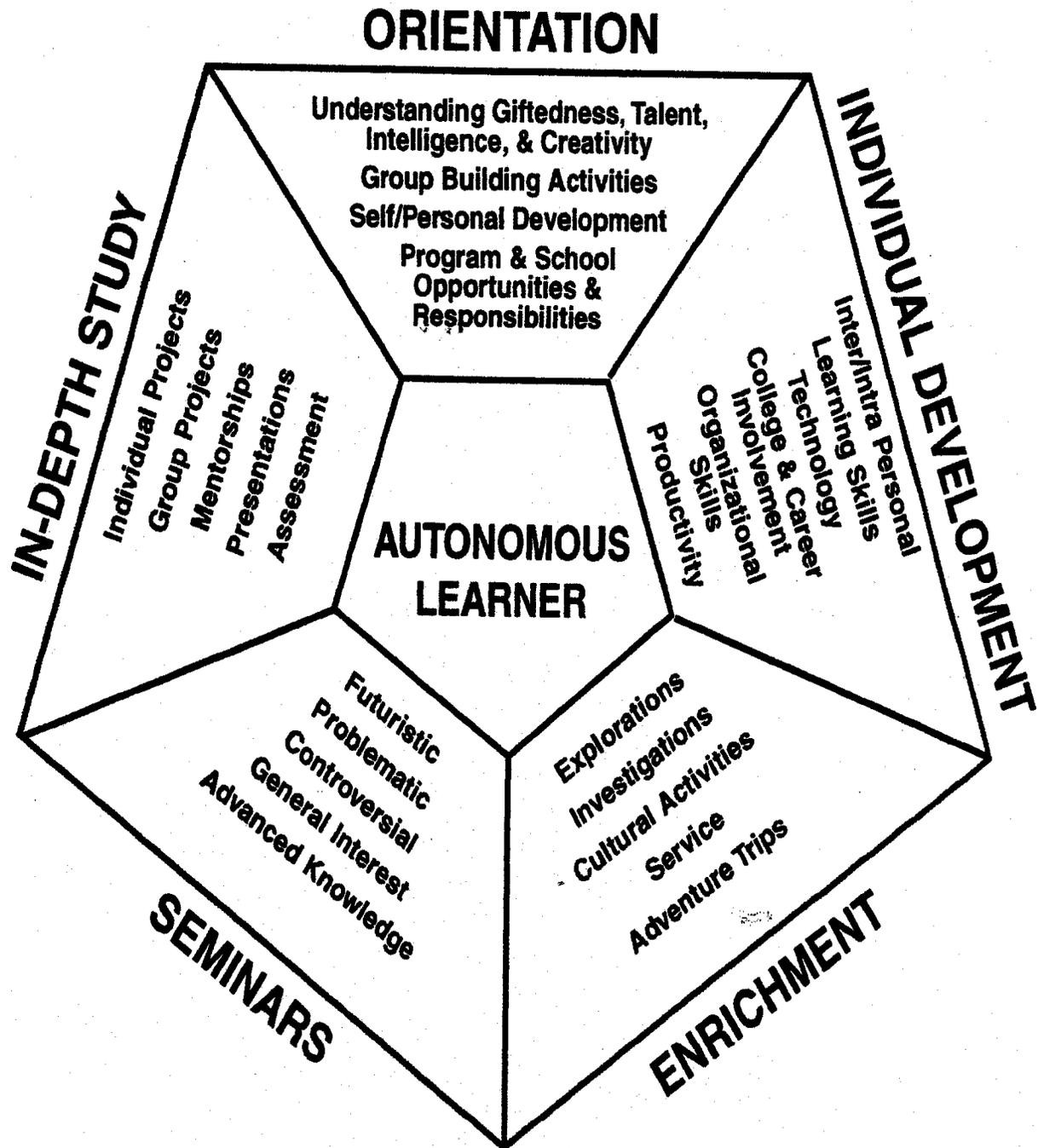
F _____

- I am respected by other people
- I am proud of myself
- I love to learn
- I learn on my own
- People like me and want to be my friend
- I am accepting of others

The Autonomous Learner Model

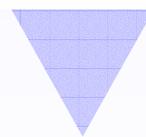
- Emphasis is placed on meeting the individualized needs of the learner through the use of activities in the five major dimensions of the model:
 - I. Orientation
 - II. Individual Development
 - III. Enrichment
 - IV. Seminars
 - V. In-Depth Study

The Five Dimensions of the Model

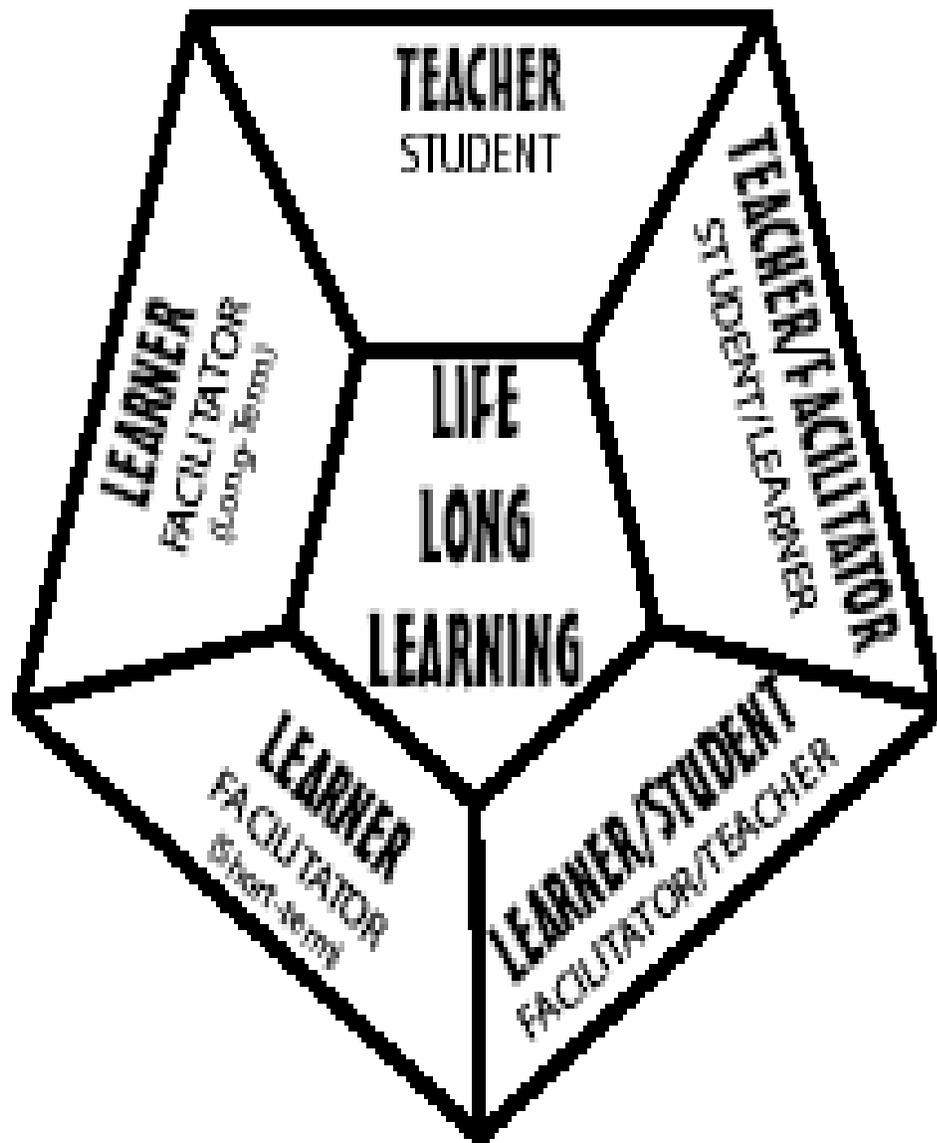


Characteristics of the Life-long Learner, or Autonomous Learner

- Has a positive self concept/esteem
- Is accepting of others
- Is perceptive and understanding
- Interacts effectively
- Has problem finding & problem solving ability
- Is creative and independent
- Discovers & develops passions
- Wants to impact the world in a positive way
- Sees learning as a life-long journey



Changing Roles

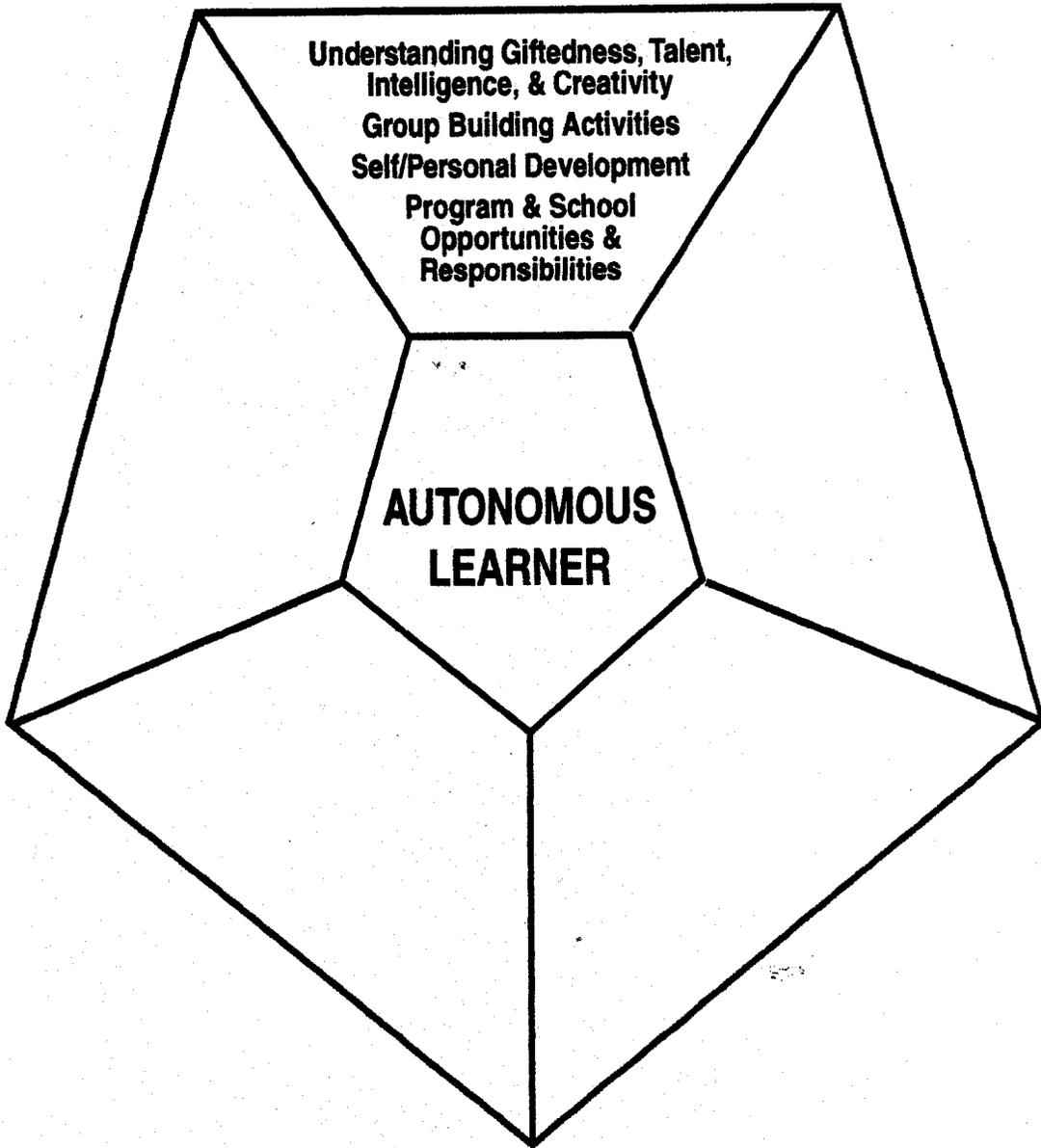


Orientation

ORIENTATION

**Understanding Giftedness, Talent,
Intelligence, & Creativity
Group Building Activities
Self/Personal Development
Program & School
Opportunities &
Responsibilities**

**AUTONOMOUS
LEARNER**



FIND SOMEONE WHO....

PLAYS CHESS	LOVES CATS OR DOGS	ASKS "WHAT IF"	HAS STRONG PASSIONS
LOVES PUNS	SPEAKS A 2ND LANGUAGE	LIKES CLASSICAL MUSIC	IS CHALLENGING
BEEN IN A GT CLASS BEFORE	HAS BEEN TO ANOTHER COUNTRY	WILL ALWAYS BE A KID AT HEART	HAS A JOB
BORN EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI	WRITES POETRY	PLAYS A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT	LOVES SUNSETS
LOVES TO EAT PIZZA	KNOWS A FAMOUS PERSON	HAS MORE THAN 1 SIBLING	LOVES TO READ
WILL HIKE WITH THE LARKS	IS A TREKKIE	BORN WEST OF THE MISSISSIPPI	LOVES MATH
HAS AN ARTISTIC CRAFT/HOBBY	LOVES SPORTS	RUNS THROUGH THE SPRINKLERS	IS A RISK TAKER
INDEPENDENT, SELF-DIRECTED LEARNER	LOVES "WHERE'S WALDO"	GOES TO CONCERTS	_____ (your choice)

Autonomous Learner Model

Teacher Orientation Questionnaire

Directions: Teachers, please complete all of the questions on this questionnaire and then make a copy for each one of your learners. After they read the answers to your questionnaire, have them respond to your answers. What did they learn? What else do they want to learn? How will this information help them in this class or program?

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Why did you become a teacher? _____

2. What do you enjoy about the learners in your classroom? _____

3. What is your favorite part of the school day? _____

4. How do you continue to be learner, as a teacher and as a person? _____

5. What passions do you pursue? _____

6. If you could do anything you wanted to do in terms of learning, what would you do?

7. If you could have one person who is living now or who lived in the past, as your teacher for the next month, who would you choose? What would you want to learn?

8. As a result of completing this questionnaire, what have you learned? _____

7. If you could go to the library for one day and write a report on any person, place, animal or idea, what would choose?

8. What is the most interesting place you have ever visited? Why do you find it interesting?

9. What would you like to do when you grow up? What skills will you need to be able to do this?

10. What is the best thing that has ever happened to you?

11. What makes you an interesting person for other people to know?

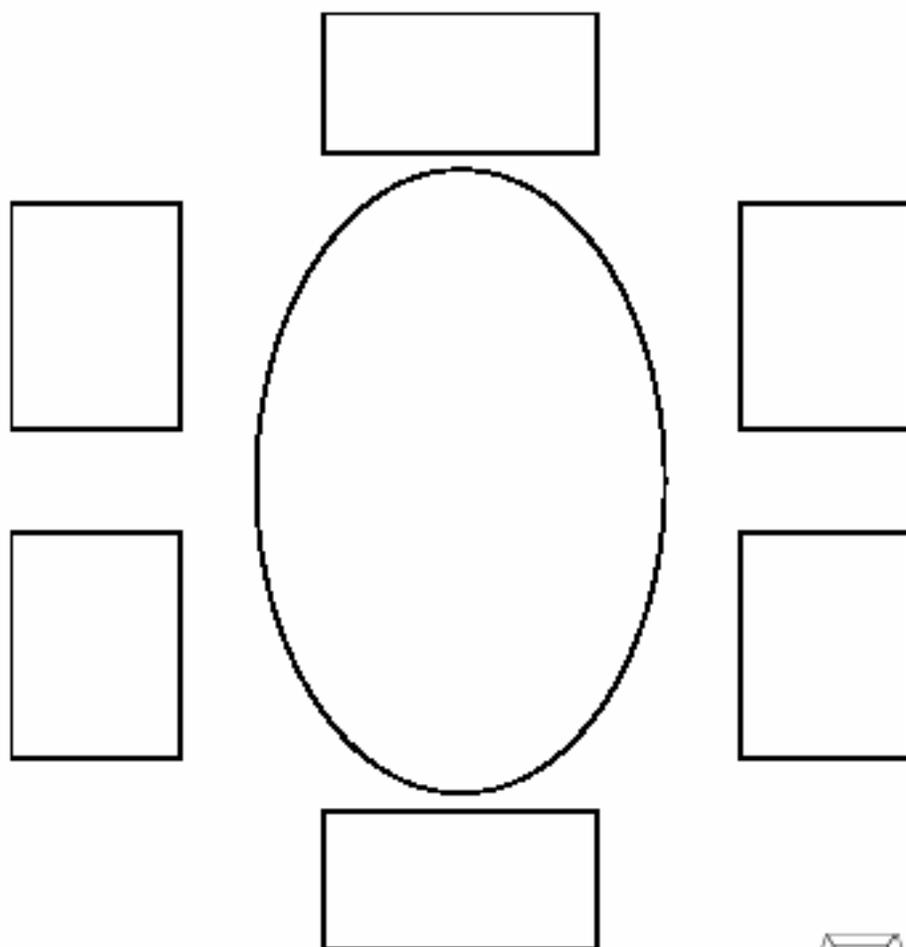
12. Describe how you like to learn? What do you do?

13. What is one topic you continue to learn about on your own?

14. How do you learn on your own? What do you do?

15. Have you ever asked a question that nobody knew the answer to? If so, write the question here? If not, think up a question and write it here.
16. What kind of games do you like to play?
17. What kinds of books do you like to read?
18. What is your favorite book? How many times have you read it?
19. What do you like to do outside of school?
20. Do you ponder? What do you ponder?
21. You have three months to do whatever you want. You also have all the money you want. What would you do with your time and money?
22. If you could change one thing in your life right now, what would you change?
23. Write your own question and answer it.

26. You are having dinner and can invite anyone you want. The people can be real, or fictional (like a cartoon). Who are they? Where does everyone sit? Why do they sit in those places?





MI Boxes

Name: _____

Date: _____

In each box there are squares next to responses. If the sentence is most like you color the square green. If the sentence is like you sometimes color the square yellow. If the sentence is not like you, color the square red. Next to the letter in each rectangle, write the number of green squares.

A

- I like to talk.
- I like to read.
- I like to write stories.
- I like to learn new words.
- I like the game of SCRABBLE.
- I like rhymes and poems.

B

- I love numbers.
- I love adding and subtracting.
- I love math and science.
- I love problem solving.
- I love finding patterns.
- I love to measure or sort things.

C

- I like to look at charts and maps.
- I daydream.
- I like movies and videos.
- I love puzzles.
- I like to look at pictures.
- I like to draw.

D

- I like to build things.
- I love sports like soccer.
- I like to move around a lot.
- I like to "clown around."
- I like to dance and exercise.
- I like to show how I feel by moving.

E

- I like to listen to music.
- I like many kinds of music.
- I like to sing and whistle.
- I like to play instruments.
- I like to perform music.
- I like to create music.

F

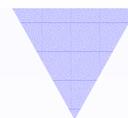
- I like to be around people.
- I get along with my friends.
- I like to talk to my friends.
- I like to play games with friends.
- I try to understand my friends.
- I know how to play with others.

G

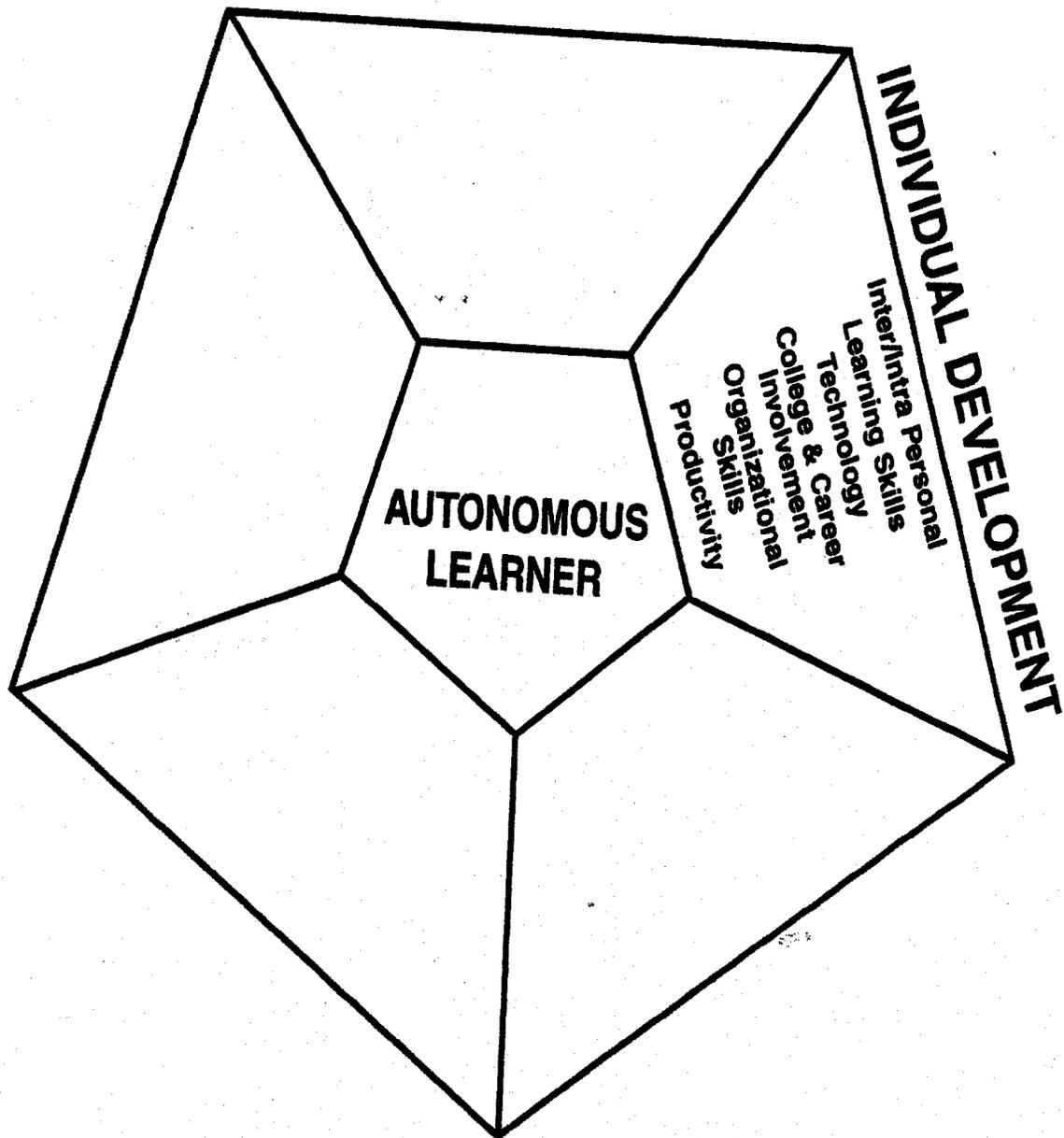
- I like to be by myself.
- I like to write in my journal.
- I like to work by myself.
- I learn from things I do.
- I like to learn about things I want.
- I know what I need to be happy.

H

- I like to be outside.
- I have many pets.
- I know ways to save the earth.
- I like to learn about animals.
- I like to learn about plants.
- I like jobs with plants or animals.



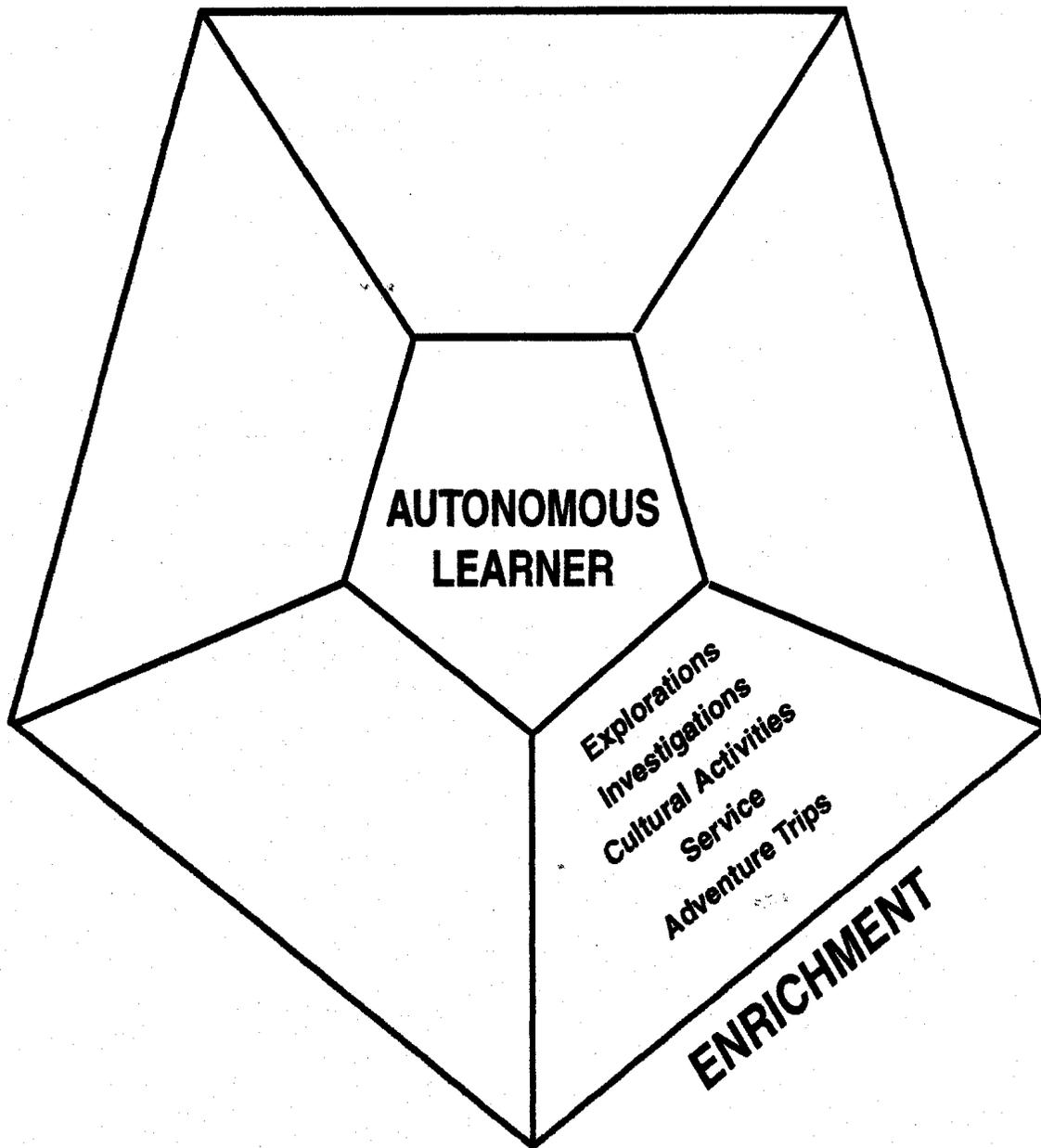
Individual Development



Individual Development

Provides learners with the opportunity to develop the cognitive, emotional, social and physical skills, concepts, and attitudes that necessary for life-long learning.

Enrichment



School Name

Date

Facilitator Name

INVESTIGATION PROPOSAL

Title of Investigation:	Name:
Brief Description:	Resources (Material and Human):
Specific Activities:	
Mini-Product Description:	Evaluation Criteria:
Mini-Presentation:	

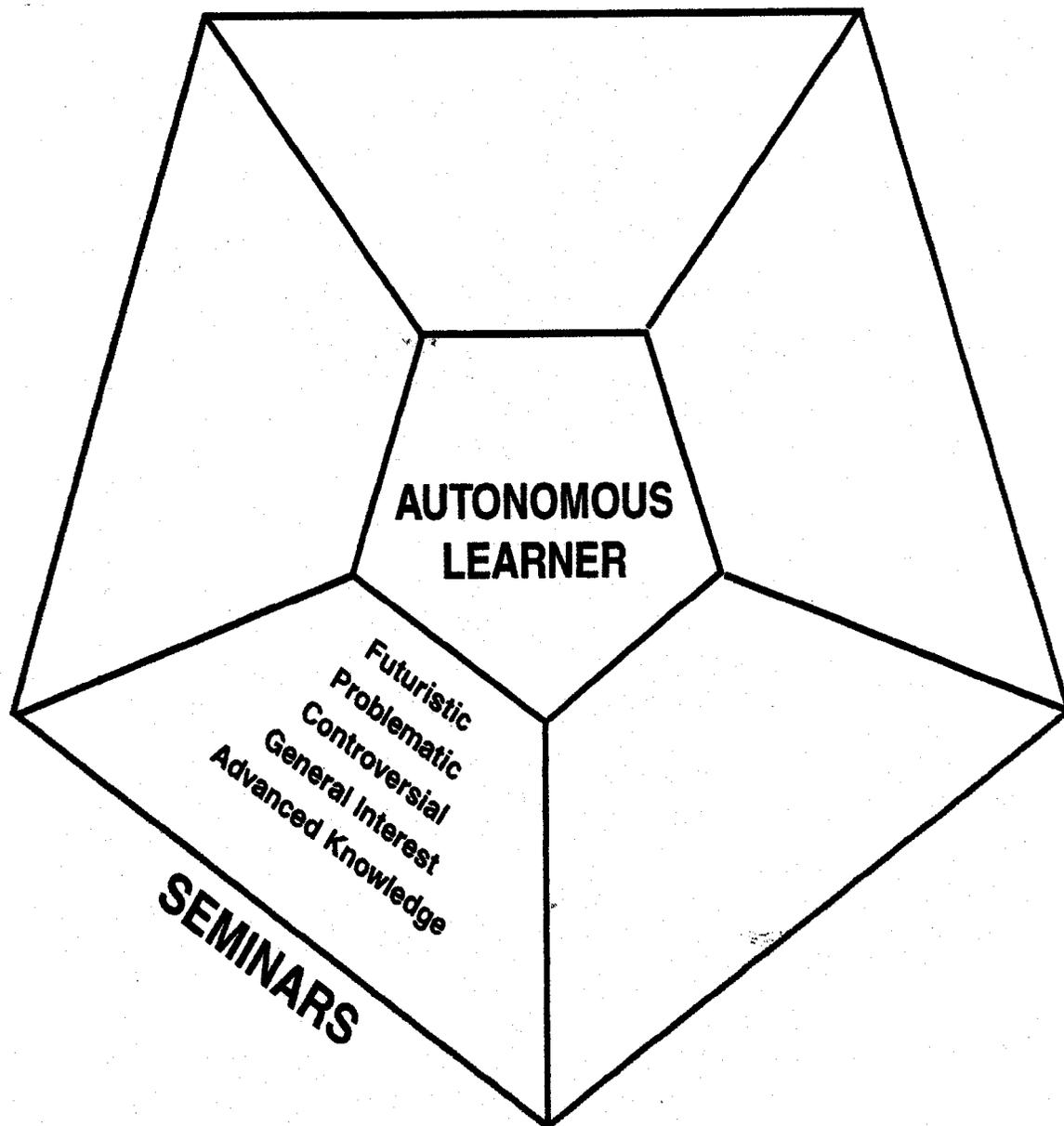
Enrichment Dimension

- Provided learners with the opportunities to explore content that is not usually part of the everyday curriculum.
 - Differentiation by the learner

Enrichment Dimension

The highest level of learning is manifested when a learner has the freedom to select and to pursue content or topics in their own style.

Seminars



SEMINAR PROPOSAL

Topic:		Date of Presentation:
Relevance of Topic:	What the audience will learn:	
Introduction Plan:	Members' Responsibilities:	
Audience Activity:		
Discussion Questions:	Audience Criteria:	Group Criteria:
Closure:		

Seminar Dimension

- Is designed to give learners in groups of three to five opportunities to:
 - Research a topic
 - Present it as a seminar to the rest of the class and other interested people
 - Assess it by criteria selected and developed by the learners

Seminar Dimension

- If students are to become learners, they must have the opportunity for independent individual and group learning which means having a structure that allows and promotes the development of new knowledge for the individuals.

Categories of Seminars

- Futuristic
- Problematic
- Controversial
- General Interest
- Advanced Knowledge

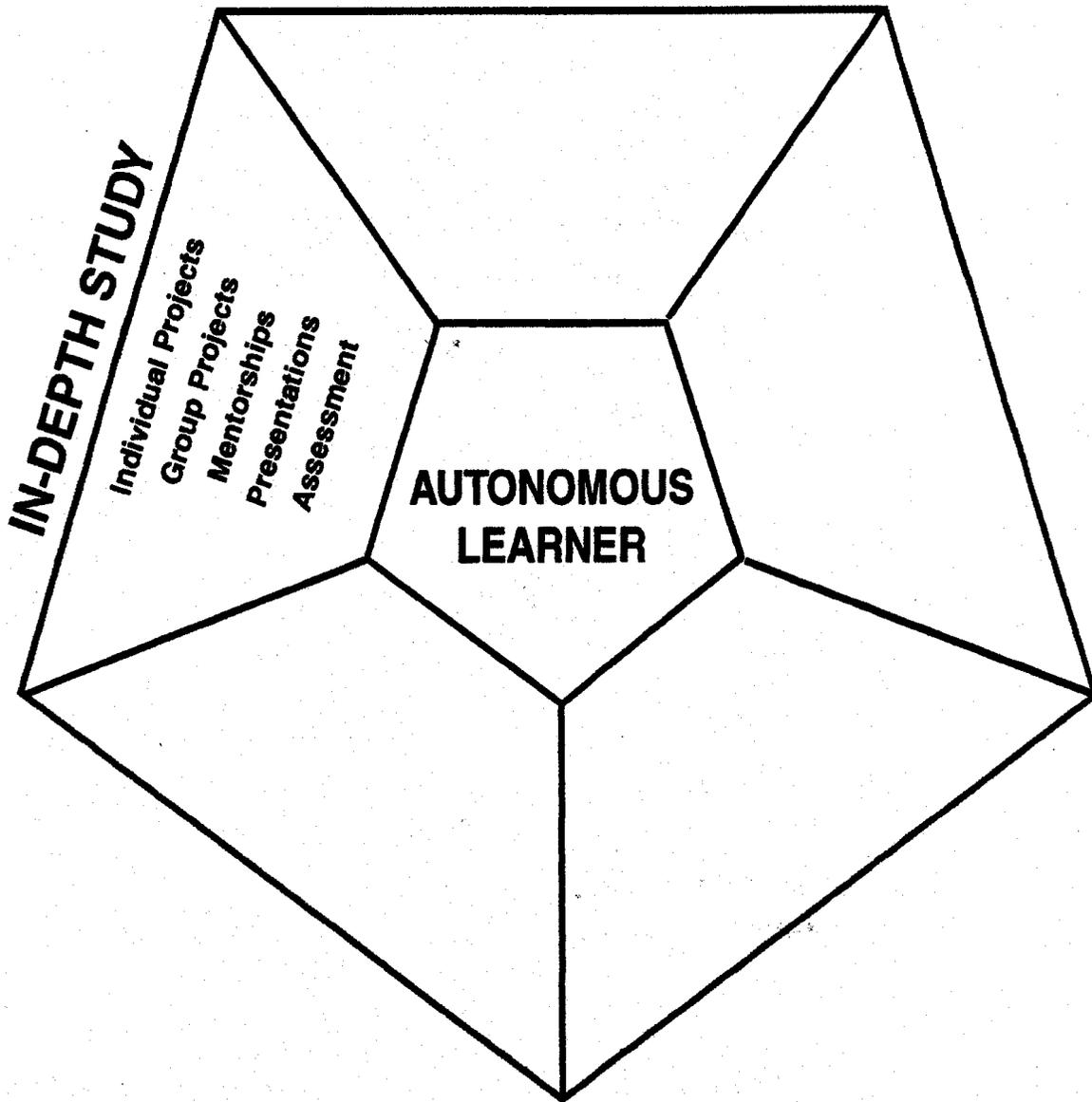
Format of a Seminar

Presentation of Factual Information

Discussion Activity

Closure

In-Depth Study



In-Depth Study Proposal

I will study: <i>(Topic)</i>	Name:
More specifically: <i>(Description)</i>	My material resources:
	My human resources (mentor):
My content Standards	My final product:
The specific activities I will do as part of my project:	My presentation:
	My date of presentation:
	I will present to appropriate audiences at:
I will show analysis by:	My grade will be based on: <i>(Criteria)</i>
I will show synthesis by:	

In-Depth Study Dimension

- Empowers learners to pursue areas of interest through the development of a long term small group or individual in-depth studies.

In-Depth Study Dimension

- The learners will determine:
 - What will be learned
 - How it will be learned
 - How it will be presented
 - What facilitation will be necessary
 - What the final product will be
 - How the learning process will be assessed

In-Depth Study Dimension

- In-depth studies are usually continued for a long period of time.
- Plans are developed by the learners, in cooperation with the teacher/facilitator, content specialist, and mentors.

In-Depth Study Dimension

- The plans are then implemented and completed by the learners with presentations being made at appropriate times until the completion of the project.
- A final presentation and assessment is given to all who are involved and interested

Topic: The Moon Exploration

- Brainstorm & make a mind map of the different topics associated with the moon.
- Find three poets who write about the moon and share their poetry with a friend.
- Collect information about the manned flights to the moon.
- Interview the personnel at the local planetarium
- Find three websites about the moon

Topic: The Moon Investigations

- Write poetry or a story about the man on the moon (Verbal Linguistic)
- Chart the phases of the moon for your location & make a moon watching calendar (Logical Mathematical)
- Demonstrate a moon dance or walk (Bodily Kinesthetic)
- Journal the effects that phases of the moon have on people from your observations (Interpersonal)

Investigations (continued)

- Moodle (Intrapersonal)
- Create a pattern of rhythms related to phases of the moon (Musical)
- Develop a model that portrays the myths about the moon using five different geometric shapes (Spatial)
- Develop a nature walk done by the light of the moon for your locality (Naturalist)

Topic: The Moon

In-depth Studies

- Design a collection of original poems based on myths about the moon.
- Create a photographic essay on the thirteen moons of the Native American Culture.
- Create a planetarium show about the roles & influences of moons in our solar system.
- Complete an essay on the knowledge bases concerning the moon for the past century.

On-going Processing

- What did you learn?
- What do you experience?
- And now what?

Additional Information

ALPS Publishing

1-800-345-2577

www.alpspublishing.com

Email: alpspublishing@comcast.net

PO Box 336052

ALPS Publishing, Greeley, CO 80633

21th Annual ALM Conference

June 19 - 24, 2007

Estes Park, Colorado

Autonomous Learner Model books:

The Autonomous Learner Model: Optimizing Ability

George Betts & Jolene Kercher

The Young Gifted Child & The Autonomous Learner Model

George Betts, Royal Toy and Kaylee Vasquez

Resources
available from
Learning Network NZ
www.learningnetwork.ac.nz

