

# Mobius Response Model: A New Twist for Differentiated Learning & Gifted Education

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*Say goodbye to cookie-cutter curriculum and its predictable approach for all students.*

*Say hello to the Mobius Response Model that lets your students' learning needs lead the way for differentiation and gifted education.*

The Mobius Response Model (**MRM**) represents a creative structure for responding to individual students' learning needs. It offers a user-friendly metaphor for effective gifted education by focusing on and connecting four critical foundational points for teaching and appropriately differentiated learning: **(A) planning**, **(B) assessment**, **(C) programming**, and **(D) learning environment**.

## What is the Mobius Response Model?

The model's name comes from the Mobius strip, a two dimensional surface with only one perceptible side, discovered by mathematician August Ferdinand Mobius in 1958. If you give a simple strip of paper a twist and connect the ends, it changes form entirely!

No matter how you cut it lengthwise, it unravels into an array of linked strands. As you continue to work with it, it becomes something surprisingly new and different with every additional lengthwise cut, even though it always remains connected. The Mobius strip has curious properties—a twisted cylinder with no distinct inner or outer sides, giving it a kind of never-endingness, and a double track edge toward excitement and unpredictability.



### Try it!

To create a Mobius strip, start with a long ribbon or paper rectangle with points **ABCD**. Give the rectangle a half twist. Join the ends so **A** is matched with **D** and **B** is matched with **C**.\*

The MRM provides parents and teachers with an innovative way to think about education, and about creating and applying a seamless range of educational opportunities for learners.

From a Mobius perspective, meeting gifted learning needs is a transformative process that involves responding to high-level development in order to encourage it. The impetus begins with planning, and then moves from there, twisting and turning flexibly in Mobius fashion as required in order to respond to individual children's learning needs.

## Using the Mobius Response Model:

### Key “Design & Build” Elements for Targeted Differentiated Teaching and Learning

#### Planning

In order to respond effectively to children’s diverse learning needs, interests, and academic levels, teachers must engage in *planning*. This means looking at short, medium, and long term objectives for each subject area. It involves cultivating and using administrative, consultative, technical, and other kinds of supports, and developing an array of resources. Teachers have to become familiar with school policies and practices concerning Individual Education Plans for those who have special needs. Most importantly, they can help students become better planners themselves.

#### Assessment

Good educational planners think about ongoing and meaningful *assessment*. It should be woven into programming, thereby enabling steady increases in challenge levels. Teachers can practice ongoing dynamic classroom assessment by employing processes that are flexible. A variety of assessment formats enable teachers to be diagnostic—that is, able to identify students’ areas of strength and weakness, and becoming better prepared to respond suitably. Teachers can encourage children to help with assessment tasks in ways that increase their learning (and perhaps even lighten the teacher’s workload).

#### Programming

The ultimate goal of *programming* is to adopt a flexible continuum (or range-of-options approach) to facilitate a learner-learning match for each child.

How can teachers accomplish this? They can focus on pre-assessing children’s levels of understanding, on designing instructional processes that are well-suited to individuals’ knowledge, preferences, and interests, and on scaffolding learning as it happens. Teachers can also find ways to work collaboratively with others to set and reach planned learning objectives.

#### Learning Environment

*Learning environment* will ideally foster high-level development in *all* children. In such an environment, the teacher diagnoses student ability on an ongoing basis and builds from there; works proactively and collegially with others; uses multiple teaching strategies with clear criteria for learning outcomes; is attuned to diversity; adopts changing group formations; taps technological advances; helps students plan and monitor their own goals; and advocates for, develops, and implements appropriately targeted professional development opportunities.

### So, what is new about the MRM?

It provides a conceptual framework for identifying, encouraging, and supporting high-level development. Its innovation and potency lie in the seamless coming together of all four elements.

Like the Mobius strip, the impetus is to have a smooth approach, reflecting never-ending possibilities for children’s growth. The strong connections between *planning*, *assessment*, *programming*, and *learning environment* are ties that strengthen educational offerings and optimize child development. And, with whatever matters to each teacher still tracked uppermost—be it an emphasis on process and product, or thought and action, or challenge and support—there are no limits.

The MRM is a creative conceptualization that both amplifies the value of a differentiated approach, and leads to engaged vitality. Like what inevitably happens when one works with a Mobius strip, there will be increased excitement as teaching and learning unfold in many surprising, positive, and infinitely interconnected directions!

\*Instructions retrieved from <http://scidiv.bcc.ctc.edu/MATH/Mobius.html>