

ACADEMIC RIGOR

“Academic rigor means posing big questions. Academic rigor means seeking answers to questions that truly matter. The teacher of such a course needs to be willing to show how the questions matter and needs to free himself or herself from the bondage of answer keys and teachers’ manuals. The teacher of an academically rigorous course needs to LIVE the content of the course, rather than merely administer it. Success in academic rigor is achieved by those who know WHAT they teach and not simply HOW they are supposed to teach.

Finally, the cause of academic rigor is the flowering of gifted education. We can make a difference in the lives of our students and even in the life of our society as a whole, once we resolve to return to the things that matter in academics. We can make ourselves indispensable in education only when we take on a task that is indispensable. And that is when we all begin to teach subjects and ideas indispensable to a democratic society – indispensable to people whose lives have meaning both to themselves and to their society.”

R. Sawyer, *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*
“*IN DEFENSE OF ACADEMIC RIGOR*”
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