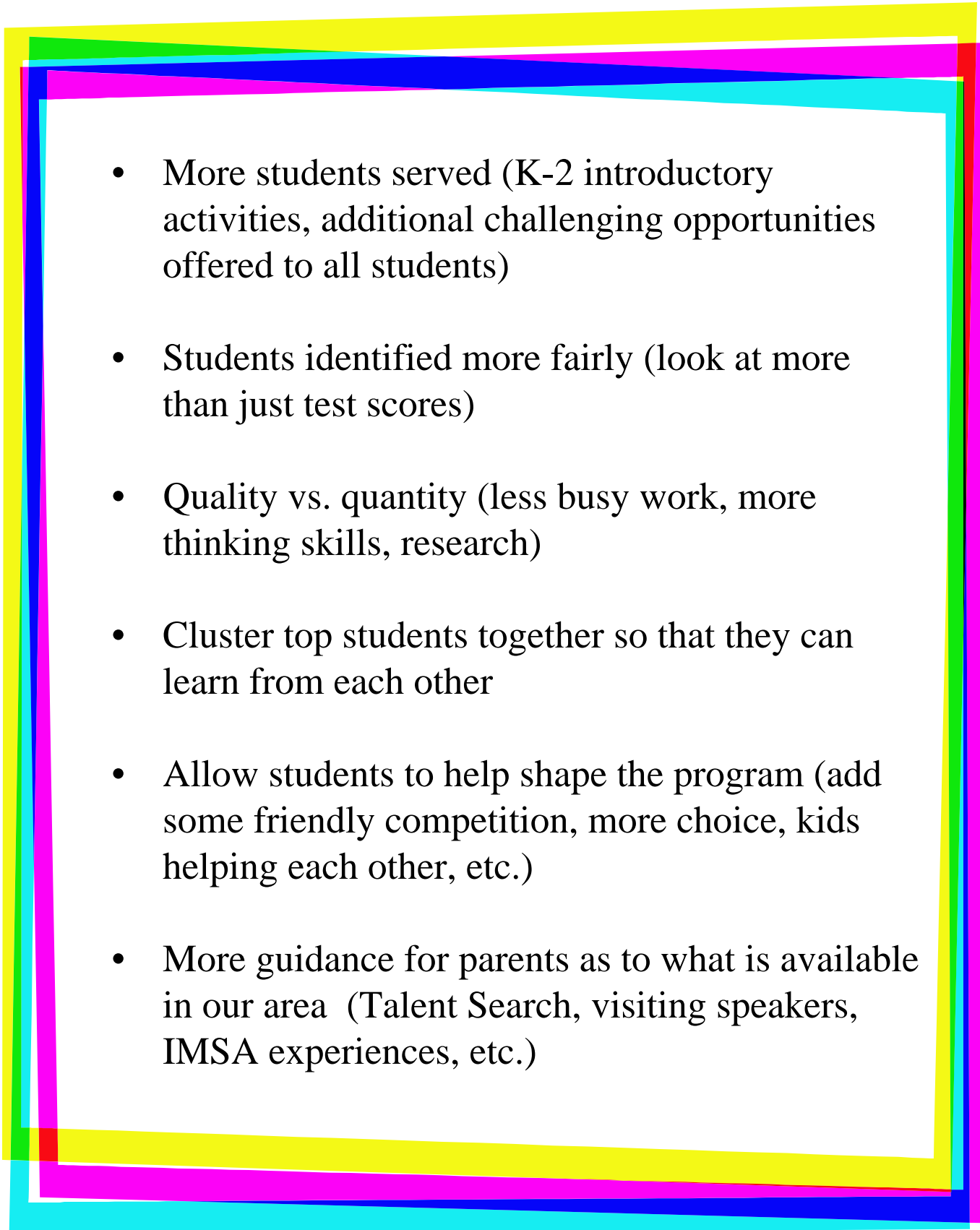


Past experiences that have been helpful for your child:

- Hands-on in nature
- A pace that keeps them interested
- Summer offerings
- Group activities
- Enough challenging homework
- Projects
- Novel studies
- Critical thinking skills involved
- Meaningful work (doesn't feel like a penalty)

Experiences/components we need to consider
for future programming:

- Areas other than language arts and mathematics (science, fine arts, foreign languages, etc.)
- Ongoing programming (after-school activities, summer events)
- Better communication to all stakeholders (ongoing, description/ criteria clarity, student and parent support, what test scores and report cards mean, characteristics of gifted learners, how my child's program differs from the 'regular' program, what role parents can play in identification and how can parents help, funding updates)

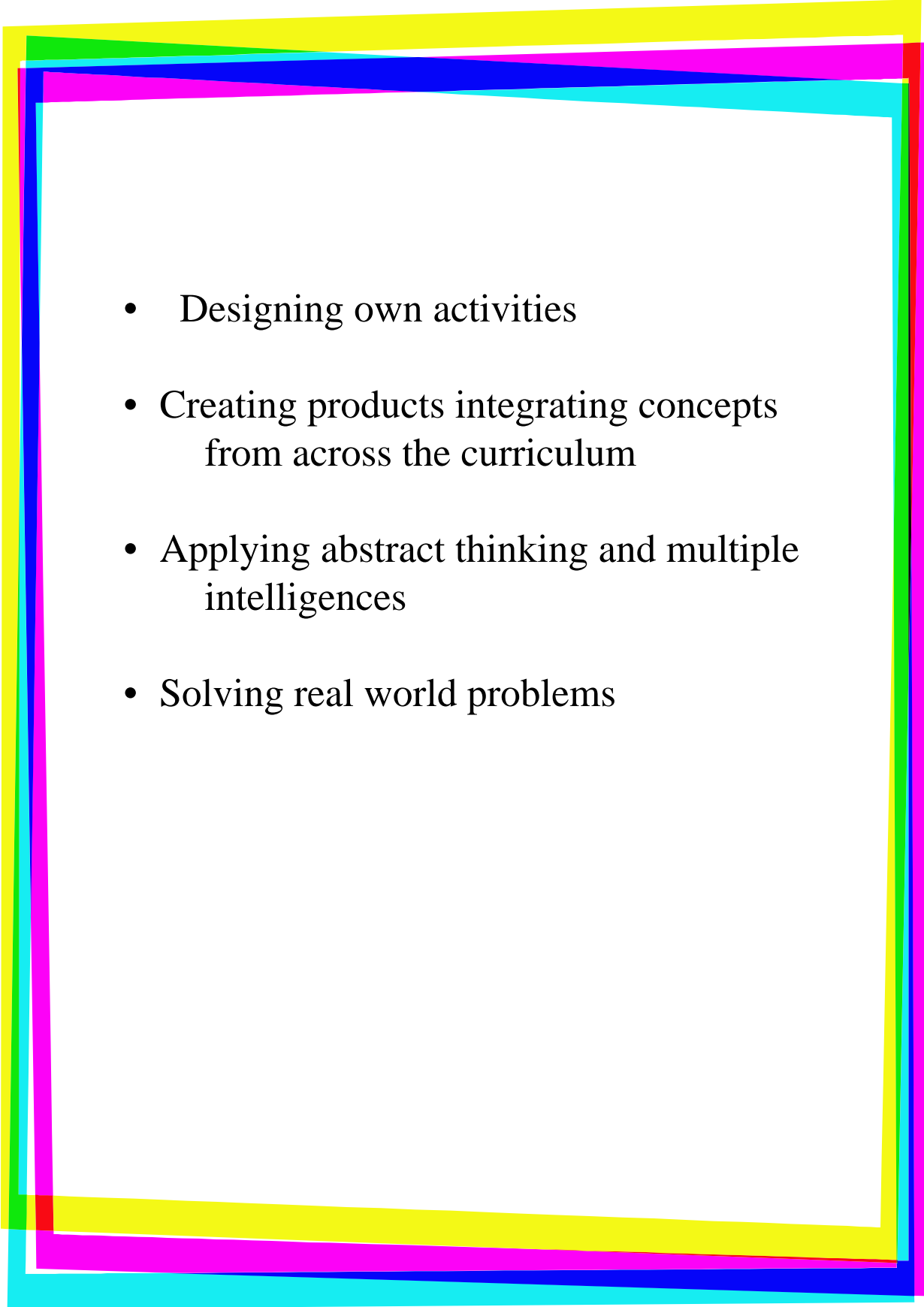
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- More students served (K-2 introductory activities, additional challenging opportunities offered to all students)
 - Students identified more fairly (look at more than just test scores)
 - Quality vs. quantity (less busy work, more thinking skills, research)
 - Cluster top students together so that they can learn from each other
 - Allow students to help shape the program (add some friendly competition, more choice, kids helping each other, etc.)
 - More guidance for parents as to what is available in our area (Talent Search, visiting speakers, IMSA experiences, etc.)

What we've been trying this year:

- PETS for grades 1-3
- Gifted clusters (grades 2-5)
- Accelerated sections (grades 6-8)
- Differentiated instructional strategies

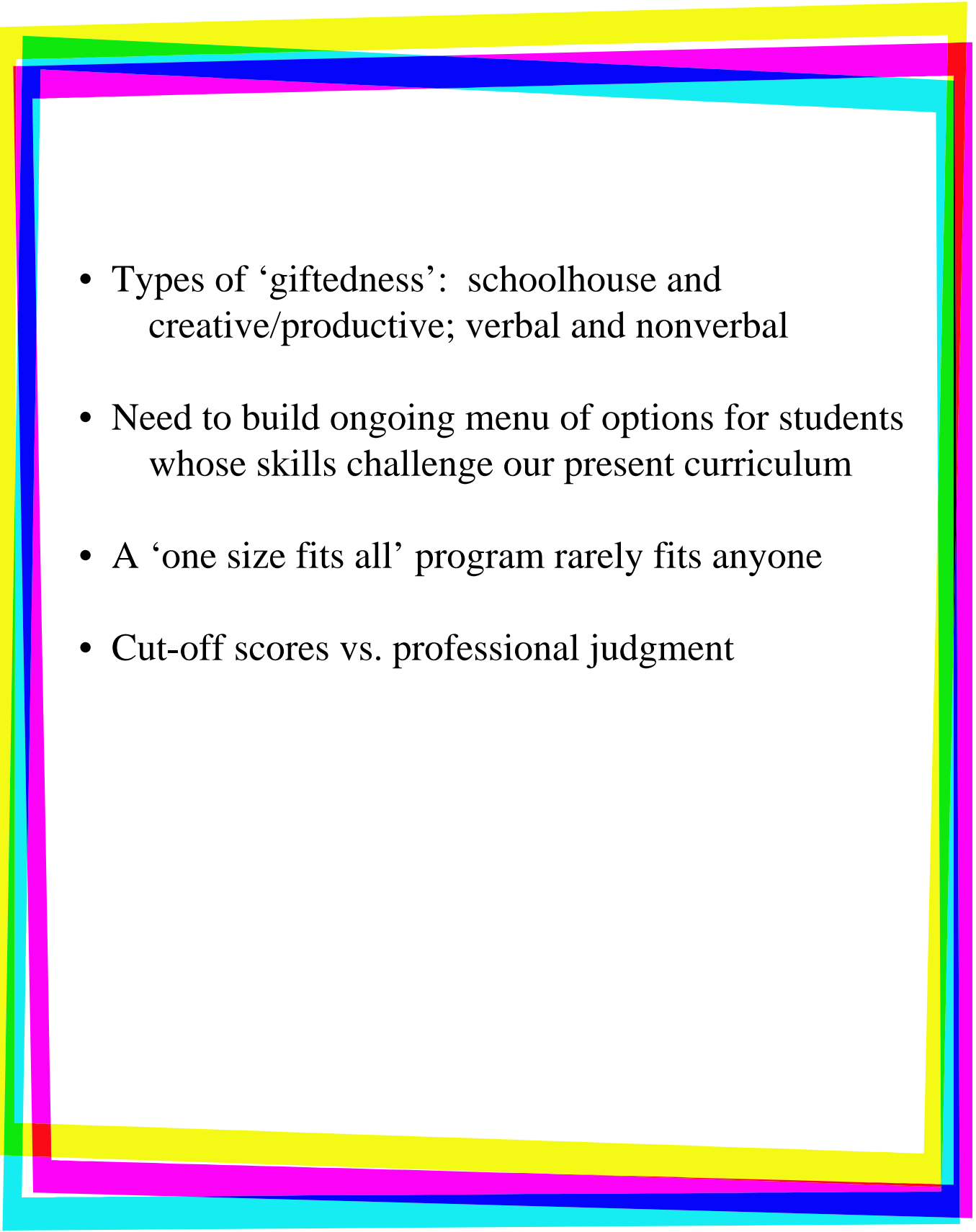
Differentiated instructional strategies:

- Contracting
- Curriculum compacting
- Extension menus/options
- Group projects
- Questioning strategies
- Use of technology in research, creating web pages, graphing
- Faster pace
- Concept mapping
- Pre- and post-testing
- Reflection journals

- 
- Designing own activities
 - Creating products integrating concepts from across the curriculum
 - Applying abstract thinking and multiple intelligences
 - Solving real world problems

Where we're headed in our thinking:

- Fulfilling the destiny of all students
(DEveloping Special Talents IN Youth)
- Finding students whose exceptional abilities warrant curriculum modifications (adaptive individual education)
- Forget labels and quotas; just meet student needs (critical to develop the potential of all learners, not just the top 5%)
- Look at performances, scores/grades, personality characteristics (motivation, creativity, passion/interests, energy, imagination, independence, leadership, etc.)
- Replace 'identification/placement' with 'assess/educate'

- 
- Types of ‘giftedness’: schoolhouse and creative/productive; verbal and nonverbal
 - Need to build ongoing menu of options for students whose skills challenge our present curriculum
 - A ‘one size fits all’ program rarely fits anyone
 - Cut-off scores vs. professional judgment

Where we're headed in our planning:

- Studying MAP assessment system (out of level testing)
- Developing materials differentiated for our top learners
- Training staff on instructional strategies for top learners and providing coaching support
- Changing introduction to kindergarten
- Continuing PETS for grades 1-3 and adding kindergarten
- Teaching program options to staff, students and parents so that all are clear on what's possible