

Grade Acceleration Case Study: Skipping Second Grade
Acceleration Type: Whole Grade Acceleration

Submitted by Gifted Intervention Specialist

"Sarah" was brought to my attention in kindergarten by her classroom teacher. She had written a chapter book on the class computer and illustrated it with her own drawings. At first I thought that her parents had helped her write it, but later learned that it was all written independently. When tested, she was easily identified in the gifted range. The gifted staff provided curricular support for Sarah's teacher, but her main concern was regarding Sarah's preference for playing alone during recess.

Her first grade teacher saw the need for subject acceleration in language arts as Sarah's lexile score was falling in the high fourth-grade level. She was reading fluently and with expression and continued to write complete stories with correct grammar and creative detail. After several months of going to a second grade teacher for reading and language arts, Sarah complained about not wanting to leave her first grade class. She felt like she didn't belong to either class. The principal, her teachers, her parents and the gifted coordinator met and decided to let her remain full time in first grade with support from the gifted education specialist. We then started to discuss whole grade acceleration and began using the Iowa Acceleration Scale to help us make the best decision for her.

According to the IAS, she was an excellent candidate for whole grade acceleration. We met with the principal, parents, gifted education coordinator, first grade teacher and potential third grade teacher, and decided that Sarah would begin third grade instead of second grade in the fall.

We had a meeting after Sarah's first month in third grade and the teacher's greatest concern during that meeting was that she continued to need gifted support for her academics. Three years later she remains at the top of her class, with lots of friends. I feel confident that accelerating Sarah at a young age helped her maintain a positive attitude toward school and helped to better meet her academic and social needs.