

Special Category

Beta Test an AI-Powered Reading Platform

Critical Reading Journeys (CRJ) is an AI-powered reading platform for gifted and advanced students in grades 3–6. Students read a story and then engage in a one-on-one conversation with an AI tutor that guides them through progressively deeper levels of thinking: **Understand, Analyze, Evaluate, Create**. It's the kind of thoughtful, individualized conversation teachers wish they had time to have with every student.

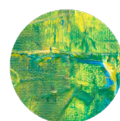
Joel McIntosh, formerly of Prufrock Press, is currently beta testing this **Altura Education** product with a handful of teachers, and the feedback has been outstanding. One tester shared, *"I've collected rave reviews of your program from the kids!! We just started, but they were talking to me about appreciating the immediate feedback and being able to dive deeper."*

Joel is now looking for additional beta testers and is offering the program **free during the beta period**. CRJ sessions run about **15–20 minutes** and work well for pull-out programs or classroom differentiation.

Teachers can sign up for the beta at <https://alturaeducation.com>.

To see what the student experience looks like, watch this informal Loom video, which shows the dialogue progression using a real student transcript and provides a look at the evaluation system: <https://www.loom.com/share/f5ee09d7e76f4af896e36c9dbd27b0c4>

For more information, contact: Joel McIntosh at joel@alturaeducation.com



Upcoming Events

Taste of Confratute—Reg. Open for Final Two Events

Join us for a Taste of Confratute! These virtual events provide interactive professional learning reflecting the flavors of Confratute. Our expert speakers address key questions and provide practical guidance for educators to support high-level learning in and out of classrooms. Each

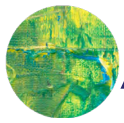
event begins with a keynote address and Q&A, followed by breakout sessions on the topics of the day.

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

Meaningful Differentiation: Linking the Why and the How
Catherine Little

How do we make our differentiation really meaningful for learners? What are the important considerations for using differentiation to support advanced learners? What are some of the pitfalls that might get in our way? Explore these questions and more during the virtual Taste of Confratute on Wednesday, February 25, 2026, featuring a keynote by Dr. Catherine Little, as we examine how intentional differentiation can deepen learning. You'll explore some of the things to do and not to do in building differentiated learning experiences, discuss key elements of differentiation to support challenge and complexity, and evaluate samples for important features. Walk away with practical ideas, instructional tools, and renewed clarity around how linking the why and the how of differentiation can elevate learning across classrooms.

[Registration is open!](#)



Awards, Publications, and Presentations

Renzulli Center Team in Gifted Child Today

The current issue of *Gifted Child Today* (January 2026) is a special issue on research emerging from projects sponsored by the Javits Program. Del Siegle and his team from the NCRGE have an article in the issue about findings from the research center, and Catherine Little and her team have an article with findings from Project LIFT. Find out more here:

<https://journals.sagepub.com/home/GCT>

For more information, contact: Catherine Little at catherine.little@uconn.edu

Arizona Gifted Conference

The Renzulli Center team is heading for some sunshine and warmth in the middle of a Connecticut winter! If you're heading to the [AAGT conference](#) in Mesa, AZ, check out presentations from Renzulli Center research scientist Kelly Kearney and recent PhD grad Shana Lusk! Kelly will be highlighting some of the work of [Project EAGLE](#) with the Arizona EAGLE team, and Shana will share some of the work she has been doing with Renzulli Center research associate Susan Dulong Langley.

For more information, contact: Del Siegle at del.siegle@uconn.edu



Research

What's Going on With Gifted Education?

UConn Today

January 15, 2026

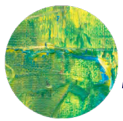
Mac Murray

UConn researchers help steer the field in new publication

While gifted and talented education programs can be found in most public schools in the country, there is no federal standard for how they are carried out—or how students are selected for them.

For educators and education researchers, this presents a problem. How can we be sure that gifted programs are fulfilling their purpose: helping ensure students are adequately challenged and supported in school? This mission is especially critical in today's era of widespread budget cuts to public education.

Read more at <https://today.uconn.edu/2026/01/whats-going-on-with-gifted-education/>



From Our Friends

Special Issue on AI in Education: PHP From NAGC

As we shared at our January Taste of Confratute, NAGC's special issue of Parenting for High Potential on [AI in Education](#) has open access right now! Check it out for a chance to dig deeper into some of the ideas shared in our TOC event!

For more information, contact: Catherine Little at catherine.little@uconn.edu

