Tips for Brainstorming Type I Topics

1. **Conduct Pre-Brainstorming.** Because the major purpose of Type I Enrichment is to identify topics that are not ordinarily covered in the regular curriculum, it is a good idea to have staff review textbooks, curriculum guides, and supplementary materials used in a particular subject before the actual brainstorming process begins. These materials may spark ideas related to the curriculum. For example, a group of middle grade science teachers noted that their regular curriculum included an extensive unit on "heat," but nothing on "cold," and as a result "cryogenics" (the study of the effects of extreme low temperatures on matter) was added as a possible Type I experience. Familiarity with the regular curriculum will help avoid a mere downward extension of topics that ordinarily might be covered in subsequent years.

2. **Focus on Topics.** Review what is meant by a Type I experience and its function in the Schoolwide Enrichment Model. The focus of Type I brainstorming should be on topics not ordinarily covered in the regular curriculum, not on procedures. Many teachers feel compelled to list activities (or ready-to-implement Type III projects) rather than topics. Type I exploratory experiences may ultimately lead to real-life Type III investigations.

3. **Discuss Brainstorming Procedures.** Review general brainstorming procedures. The idea is to create as many ideas as possible. There should be no criticism.

4. **Form Groups.** Divide into groups by subject area (or grade) and elect a chairperson. Each group can also divide into subgroups by grade level if the original group is too large. Ideally, the final group size should be 4–8 people.

5. **Develop a List.** Each group should develop and record all ideas for possible Type I topics. Topic branching is an activity that can be used to facilitate this process. The group can begin with one general topic and derive related areas or subtopics using available resources. For example, "Drama" can branch into costuming, set design, directing, script writing, etc. For any one topic area, there are vast resources available that can be used to explore different subtopics. Group members may need to break off to research a particular topic and reconvene later.

6. **Review the List.** Once an extensive list is formed, the group members should reexamine it and circle topics for which they would like to develop Type I activities.