

CHARACTERISTICS OF GIFTEDNESS

Disclaimer: Although the items listed below are often seen in gifted children, it should be noted that all gifted children DO NOT exhibit all of these traits all the time.

EMOTIONAL

- Intense feelings
- Inhibition
- Strong affective memory
- Fears/Anxiety/Guilt
- Concerns with death-depressive and suicidal moods
- Concerns for others (empathy)
- Sensitivity in relationships
- Attachments to animals
- Difficulty adjusting to new environments
- Loneliness
- Self evaluation and self judgement, feelings of inadequacy and inferiority
- Why am I here?
- Passionate
- Strong sense of justice
- Remembers insults forever
- Friends with both genders/late sexual interest
- Interest in life and/or death
- Argumentativeness
- Spontaneity
- Prefers adult company
- Sophistication
- Does not want to progress until they know they can succeed

INTELLECTUAL

- Probing questions
- Problem solving learning
- Curiosity
- Capacity of sustained intellectual effort
- Avid reading, detailed planning
- Thinking about thinking
- Analytical thinking
- Introspection, love of theory and analysis
- Moral thinking
- Conceptual and intuitive integration
- Doing three things at once
- Driven to understand, complexity of understanding
- Wanting to know the reasons for things, origins of things
- Recognition of falsity/no "trophy" friends - authenticity
- Undeterred by conventional expectations
- Need for precision
- Making intuitive leaps
- Making logical projections
- Noticing what no one else does
- Early sense of responsibility
- Less physical risk taking
- Zipping through Piagetian stages
- Symbolic thinkers
- Need for precision in thinking and expression
- High ability to think abstractly that develops early
- Unusual capacity for memory
- Long concentration span
- Fascination with words and ideas
- Advanced visual and motor skills
- Ability at an early stage to think in metaphors and symbols
- Mystical
- Appears disorganized
- Questions authority

ACADEMIC

- Finding non-conventional solutions
- Originality
- Not motivated by extrinsic awards
- Discomfort with praise
- Self-taught
- Manipulation and bargaining
- Make and follow their own plans
- Large vocabulary, loves "big" words
- Not wanting to grow up and face the world
- Abstract thinkers before having the emotional ability to handle it
- Extraordinary speed in processing information
- Need for precision in thinking and expression
- Ability to relate to a broad range of ideas and synthesize commonalities among them
- Appreciation of complexity, finding myriad alternative meanings in even the most simple issues or problems
- Ability to learn in an integrative, intuitive, non-linear manner
- Ability to perceive many sides of an issue
- Learns rapidly
- Independence in work and study
- High degree of curiosity
- Retentiveness
- High level of figural skills
- Keen powers of observation
- Jumps over process and arrives at misunderstood, often brilliant outcome
- Boredom



Bright Child

Gifted Learner

- Knows the answer.
- Is interested.
- Is attentive.
- Has good ideas.
- Works hard.
- Answers the questions.
- Top group.
- Listens with interest.
- Learns with ease.
- 6-8 repetitions for mastery.
- Understands ideas.
- Enjoys peers.
- Grasps the meaning.
- Completes assignments.
- Is receptive.
- Copies accurately.
- Enjoys school.
- Absorbs information.
- Technician.
- Good memorizer.
- Enjoys straightforward, sequential presentation.
- Is alert.
- Is pleased with own learning.
- Asks the questions.
- Is highly curious.
- Is mentally and physically involved.
- Has wild, silly ideas.
- Plays around, yet tests well.
- Discusses in detail, elaborates.
- Beyond the group.
- Shows strong feelings and opinions.
- Already knows.
- 1-2 repetitions for mastery.
- Constructs abstractions.
- Prefers adults.
- Draws inferences.
- Initiates projects.
- Is intense.
- Creates a new design.
- Enjoys learning.
- Manipulates information.
- Inventor.
- Good guesser.
- Thrives on complexity.
- Is keenly observant.
- Is highly self-critical.



CHARACTERISTICS

- Learns more rapidly
- Stronger need to know (curious)
- Superior abstract thinking skills
- Superior communication skills
- Longer attention span
- Perceives more unusual relationships
- Sees/creates patterns
- More intense interests
- More intellectually playful
- Better at sensing discrepancies
- Better retention of information
- More imaginative

James A. Curry, 1980

N-T/H-C-5b



Fifteen Student Characteristics of Potential Giftedness

- Student's use of *Language*.
- Quality of student's *questions*.
- Quality of *examples, illustrations, or elaborations* that a student uses in explaining some thing or in describing events or in telling stories.
- Student's use of *quantitative expressions and quantitative reasoning*.
- Student's ability to *devise or adopt a systematic strategy* for solving problems and to change the strategy if it is not working.
- Special skills students exhibit that are *unusual for their age or grade*.
- Student's *innovative use of common materials in the classroom or outside of it*.
- Student's *breadth of information*.
- Student's *depth of information in a particular area*.
- Student's *collections of materials or hobbies*.
- Student's *persistence on uncompleted tasks*.
- Student's *absorption in intellectual tasks*.
- *Extensiveness of student's exploratory behavior*.
- Student's *criticalness of his or her own performance*.
- Student's *preferences for complexity, difficulty, and novelty in tasks*.

Adapted from Elizabeth Hagen, *Identification of the Gifted*, pgs.23-26.