

Common Characteristics

In preschool years, giftedness can be demonstrated by early physical development, early language development, and/or exceptional powers of observation and curiosity. While it is rare for a gifted child to exhibit all of the following characteristics, it is common for a gifted child to manifest many of them:

- Good problem-solving abilities
- Learns rapidly
- Extensive vocabulary
- Good memory
- Longer attention span
- Compassion for others
- Perfectionism
- High degree of energy
- Prefers older companions
- Wide range of interests (or narrow ones with intense focus)
- Interest in experimenting and doing things differently
- Unusual sense of humor
- Early or avid reader with greater comprehension ability with puzzles, mazes or numbers
- Seems mature for age at times
- Insatiable curiosity and persistence
- Intense concentration
- Perseverance in areas of interest
- May question authority
- Advanced sense of conscience, concern about the world
- Perceives abstract ideas, understands complex concepts
- Sees relationships
- May demonstrate intense emotional and/or physical sensitivity
- Exhibits creativity

Bright Child or Gifted Learner

Bright Child

Knows the answers

Is interested

Is attentive

Has good ideas

Works hard

Answers the questions

Top group

Gifted Learner

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

Listens with interest	Shows strong feeling and opinions
Learns with ease	Already knows
6-8 repetitions for mastery	1-2 repetitions for mastery
Understands ideas	Constructs abstractions
Enjoys peers	Prefers adults
Grasps the meaning	Draws inferences
Completes assignments	Initiates progress
Is receptive	Is intense
Copies accurately	Creates a new design
Enjoys school	Enjoys learning
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Technician	Inventor
Good at memorizing	Good guesser
Enjoys straightforward, sequential presentation	Thrives on complexity
Is Alert	Is keenly observant
Is pleased with own learning	Is highly self-critical

Culturally/Linguistically Diverse Students

Children of color, representing different ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds, have been underrepresented in gifted and talented programs for a variety of reasons. In addition to the use of culturally biased identification tools and practices, cultural factors such as degree of risk-taking or questioning, the established practice of working to address the needs of the group and not the individual may stand as a barrier to student nomination. Students may be required to spend time in the home, assuming roles of responsibility or may mask their intellectual abilities at school to not be noticed. Interests of these students may include culturally related, not school-based activities.

Students from Poverty

Mobility rates may make it difficult to sustain identification procedures and services. Parents and students may not trust "special labels" of being identified with special services at school. Students may have limited self-expectations and may demonstrate behavior inconsistent with school perceptions of gifted characteristics.

Underachieving Gifted Students

Students who demonstrate through standardized measures a discrepancy between intellectual and/or creative ability or potential and academic achievement and/or creative productivity are considered to be underachievers. If giftedness is not nurtured, students may become bored, frustrated, and depressed with school activities. Often

focus is on what students cannot do, instead of what a child can do. This may serve as a deterrent to engagement in school assignments.