

How do I Know If They're Really Gifted?

The Bright Child (High Achiever)	The Gifted Learner	Possible Problems Associated with Giftedness
Knows the answers	Asks the questions	Possible gullibility
Is interested	Is highly curious	Takes on too many activities
Is attentive	Is mentally and physically involved	Difficulty in accepting the illogical
Has good ideas	Has wild, silly ideas: unusual imagination	Viewed as weird by others; feels stifled by lack of creative opportunities
Works hard	Plays around, yet tests well	Disruptive in class; class clown
Answers the questions	Discusses in detail, elaborates	Tendency to challenge, question authority, unwilling to listen to opinions of others
Top group	Beyond the group	Bored with regular assignments
Listens with interest	Shows strong feelings and opinions	Dominates the discussion
Learns with ease	Already knows	Bored; can become mischievous
6-8 repetitions for mastery	1-2 repetitions for mastery	Becomes bored and frustrated; dislikes repetition
Understands ideas	Constructs abstractions	Frustrated when others don't understand
Enjoys peers	Prefers adults	Receives negative adult attitudes to smartness; viewed as a show-off, odd, superior
Grasps the meaning	Draws inferences; thinks "outside the box"	Not interested in details; rejection of the known, need to invent for oneself; invents own systems, sometimes conflicting
Completes assignments	Initiates projects	Refuses to do rote homework
Is receptive	Is intense; persistent; can concentrate on tasks of high interest for extended periods	Has difficulty with listening skills; may disrupt class routine; feels stifled by restrictions; perceived as stubborn, uncooperative; difficult to move into another topic or task; resistant to interruption
Copies accurately	Creates new designs	Viewed as unmotivated when restricted
Enjoys school	Enjoys learning; wide, diverse range of interests	Viewed as lack of attention span or concentration
Absorbs information	Manipulates information; creates new questions; ideas form existing knowledge	Seen as off task; appear to be day dreaming or not paying attention
Technician	Inventor	
Good memorizer	Good guesser	Viewed by teachers and others as not paying attention or resistant to learning
Enjoys straightforward, sequential presentation	Thrives on complexity	Dislikes shallow curriculum
Is alert	Is keenly observant	Occasional resistance to direction
Is pleased with own learning	Is highly self-critical	Perfectionist; fears failure, avoids new situations to avoid possible failure; unrealistically high goals

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Diligent worker	High energy level	Needs less sleep; becomes frustrated with inactivity, lack of challenge or active inquiry, lack of progress
Eager to please	Unusual emotional depth and intensity	Very sensitive; feels confused if thoughts and feelings not taken seriously; vulnerable to criticism; need for success and recognition
Concerned with fairness in the present	Concerned with adult/moral issues; concerned with fairness and justice on a grander scale	Develops a cynical attitude; receives intolerance from peers; feels frustrated or angry; critical of others
Feels like one of the group	Feels isolated and different from others; independence in work and study; self-reliance; need for freedom of movement and action	Low self-esteem; regards difference as bad
Laughs at jokes; repeats them	Has a keen sense of humor; invents jokes	Uses humor inappropriately; feels confused or rejected when others don't understand
	Versatility and virtuosity; diversity of interests and abilities; many hobbies; proficiency in art forms such as music or drawing	Lack of homogeneity in group work; need for flexibility and individualization, need for help in exploring and developing interests; need to build basic competencies in major interests
	Friendliness and outgoingness	Need for peer group relations in many types of groups; problems in developing social leadership

Other characteristics to look for in identifying possible gifted students. Be aware that a student may not demonstrate all of these characteristics:

Extensive reading

Exceptional memory

Advanced vocabulary, verbal fluency

Impatient

Talent in art, music, and /or drama

Demonstrates leadership or influences the activities of others (either positively or negatively)

Nonconformist