

To further inform the public concerning gifted education, the following contains valuable information about many, commonly shared characteristics of gifted youth. Most are students who have exceptional abilities surpassing those held by persons of the same age. Therefore, they are in need of educational programs other than, or in addition to, those typically offered at their grade levels. Each student is an individual with varied sets of strengths, weaknesses, likes and dislikes. They need understanding and support from parents and teachers in order to feel empowered to pursue and accomplish quality contributions to society. This occurs when intense interests and talents are supported.

Gifted Characteristics – Cognitive, Affective, and Creative. These students are able to:

- create structures and frameworks for comprehending the universe
- process information in an extremely efficient manner
- readily participate in both problem-finding and problem-solving
- demonstrate a highly developed desire to know
- be integrated thinkers – both analytically (step by step) and synthetically (skip-think manner)
- create own structures through which to understand things
- persist in a desire to know
- synthesize thinking
- demonstrate IQ from 130-149
- interest and need for a wide variety of educational opportunities and services not ordinarily provided through regular instructional programs
- high degrees of excelling in linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, kinesthetic, or musical areas
- displays of competence at the highest levels, distinctly above the expected, often in a talent performance distinctly above average in one or more fields.
- a need for teachers who value student ability and encourage excellence and achievement, who will help students understand benefits of being exceptional
- a need for teachers who have compassion and understanding which are vital to the gifted as they attempt to develop their abilities to the fullest extent
- they are not free of problems, rather they face a different set of problems, and therefore need teachers and parents to help them navigate through difficult issues
- advanced abilities to manipulate symbols
- unusual abilities to remember
- a large storehouse of facts, especially in areas of in-depth interest
- unusually deep levels of comprehension of concepts and relationships at advanced levels
- readily seen generalizations to expand what is presented to larger concepts and connections, with a level numerous grade levels above peers
- an advanced ability to concentrate for extended periods of time on investigations of interest
- high levels of curiosity with a keen and pronounced interest in the surrounding environment and what makes things work

- varied interests in nature or exhibition of a sophistication normally characterized by older children or adults
- sometimes possessing uneven cognitive and physical ability which can frustrate students because of their unusual capacity to think being far ahead of their ability to write, draw, act, or speak
- a marked sensitivity to themselves and feelings of others and events in their environment, example being a young student found crying in the school cafeteria because food was being wasted which could have helped feed the world's starving
- a preference for interaction with adults or older children to discuss issues with their mental peers
- an intense concentration, perseverance, and task commitment in many areas of interest, not just "school learning"
- perfectionist tendencies with an inner motivation to excel, ranging from high performance levels or an inability to perform for fear of failure
- leadership ability whereby others seek guidance from the gifted student
- being moralistic with a strong ethical sense of right and wrong, a deep sense of conviction to a cause and a desire to support those who they consider to be mistreated, combined with not being readily able to see gray areas in judgment
- unusual levels of resourcefulness – an ability to bring many resources to bear on a problem or task, the ability to see unusual ways to solve problems, or suggest new solutions by thinking "out of the box"
- an advanced sense of humor, sophisticated and insightful for their ages, with understanding dry wit, teachers' jokes, creation of puns or creative riddles as answers to questions
- an exhibition of high creativity corresponding to high intelligence levels
- a natural drive to explore ideas – zestful, unbridled curiosity ranging from new concepts of societal worth to those ideas seeming radical, outlandish, bizarre, or inappropriate
- an ability to see solutions as a whole first, then a preference to break ideas into parts
- challenging of the conventional, generating new ideas which challenge the status quo which may result in trouble coexisting with parents, teachers, siblings, peers
- independent thinking – creatively gifted students prefer to think for themselves, often seek their own answers, potentially resulting in new, innovative ideas sometimes viewed by others as highly threatening
- playfulness – in thoughts, actions, and products, whereby students see humor and can include it in their work, are not afraid to take risks, sometimes do things just for the sake of seeing the reaction of others

These are observably varied characteristics in need of addressing if optimal success of a gifted student is to occur. Through understanding, combined with a willingness to act, all stakeholders can contribute to the positive growth of our most talented youth. Our future as a state and nation will depend on how society acts toward developing the talents of our most gifted youth.

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