Common Characteristics of Gifted

Gifted children or students may exhibit many, but not all, of these characteristics in any one list. Those who consistently exhibit the behaviors have a strong possibility that they are "gifted".

General Characteristics

- Advanced vocabulary for chronological age
- Outstanding memory; possesses lots of information
- Curious; asks endless questions ("why?" "and then what??")
- Has many interests, hobbies, and collections
- May have a "passionate interest" that has lasted for many years
- Intense; gets totally absorbed in activities and thoughts
- Strongly motivated to do things that interest her; may be unwilling to work on other activities
- May be reluctant to move from one subject area to another
- Operates on higher levels of thinking than his age peers; is comfortable with abstract thinking
- Perceives subtle cause-and-effect relationships
- Prefers complex and challenging tasks to "basic" work
- May be able to "track" two or more things simultaneously (example: her daydreams and words)
- Catches on quickly, then resists doing work, or works in a sloppy, careless manner
- Comes up with "better ways" for doing things; suggests them to peers, teachers, and other adults
- Sensitive to beauty and other people's feelings and emotions
- Advanced sense of justice and fairness
- Aware of global issues many age peers are uninterested in
- Sophisticated sense of humor; may be "class clown"
- Transfers concepts and learning to new situations
- Sees connections between apparently unconnected ideas and activities
- May prefer the company of older children or adults
- May prefer to work alone; resists cooperative learning
- Bossy in group situations
- Needs to constantly share all he knows; impatient when not called on to recite or respond
- May be "street smart" while not doing well on school tasks
Creative Thinking

- Displays original ideas
- Sees endless possibilities for various situations or uses for objects
- Says what she thinks without regard for consequences
- Brilliant thinker, but absentminded about details or where his work might be found
- Outstanding sense of humor; loves to play with words and ideas
- Passionately interested in some topic or field of endeavor
- May be talented in the fine arts
- Fluent in idea generation and development
- Able to elaborate on ideas
- Experiments with ideas and hunches
- Great imagination; frequent daydreamer
- Values nonconformity in appearance, thought, etc.
- Standardized test scores may be significantly better than class performance

Thinking Traits

- Advanced vocabulary
- Ability to generate many solutions
- Can memorize easily
- Learns rapidly
- Questions critically
- Keen observer
- Possesses and retains a large storehouse of information
- Wide range of interests
- Limitless supply of questions
- Loves experimenting and doing things differently
- High energy levels
- Shows curiosity and originality
- Tendency to put together in ways that are unusual and not obvious

Feeling Traits

- Sensitivity to expectations and the feelings of others
- Keen sense of humor
- High level of self-awareness
- Sense of justice
- High expectations of self and others
- Risk-taking
- Enjoys fantasizing and daydreaming
- Prefers complexity
- Totally immerses self in an area of interest