

Characteristics of Giftedness

Gifted Children are Children First. Gifted Second.

Your gifted child may have some, but probably not all of these characteristics

- **Broad Range of Abilities:** A real passion for learning. They can absorb new information at incredible rates.
 - **Highly Motivated:** Intense. Very enthusiastic. They study their interests and can become very absorbed in a topic. Can become overly consumed and rebel if not interested.
 - **Extremely Curious:** This curiosity can get them into trouble. Constantly questioning. Enjoys discovery. They need to be challenged and are bored by routine. Need a lot of variety to keep their busy minds fed. Always expand and explore. Have rapid insight into cause and effect relationships. Tries to discover the how's and why's of everything.
 - **Degree and Complexity of Questions Set Them Apart:** We are doing them a disservice if we continually provide them with answers. Give them the opportunity to figure it out for themselves too.
 - **Extremely Independent:** Both in study and decision. Need to have plenty of choices. This independence can cause them to rebel against orders.
 - **Daydream:** They may daydream a great deal because in school they may already know all of the material being taught. Teachers may think they are not listening, but they really are.
 - **Verbal:** Read early. Excellent vocabulary. They may sound like adults, but we must remember they are still children emotionally and socially.
 - **Tenacious:** They will talk back. Very uninhibited in expressing opinions. A gifted child will argue their point in a clear and reasonable manner, seemingly logical. They love to debate on any issues. So, as parents, we must be good listeners.
 - **Good Thinkers:** Excellent memories. Quick. Logical. Analytical. Impatient. They can become bored by the routine and repetition in classrooms, so we must guard against developing poor study habits. Brainstorming is a very effective tool for these children.
 - **Reads a Great Deal!** On the first day of school, a gifted child already knows 50% or more of what will be taught that year. Usually prefer to read adult level books.
 - **Critical:** Self-assertive. Seeks perfection. Tend to self-evaluate. Very high standards. Hardest on themselves. Some gifted children become perfectionists. We can assume that if the child is a perfectionist, at least one parent is a perfectionist also. They need to feel valued and can become critical of self and others.
 - Gifted children are **not easily satisfied** with their own speed. They want to do everything right the FIRST time. They get frustrated easily and it becomes very stressful on them because they want to be perfect in everything they do.
 - **Sensitive:** Can overreact and blow things out of proportion. Can be very dramatic. Worry a great deal. Highly imaginative. Complex and can turn anything into a drama.
 - **Concerned with Right and Wrong:** Extremely empathetic. Just. Truthful. Concerned with good and bad, fair and unfair. They will evaluate a situation, assess the situation, and pass judgment on events, people and things. They are concerned about adult issues, such as crime, religion, race, war, starvation, and the environment.
 - Gifted children **tackle adult issues**. We should not patronize them. Answer all questions, no matter how difficult. An hour lecture is not necessary, but respect their desire to know and understand.
 - **Asking questions** like, "Why do they do that?" or "Why do they act like this?" are typical. These kinds of questions show and demonstrate a mental age higher than the chronological age. It also demonstrates an ability to distinguish something as fair or unfair. This is an advanced moral conscious.
 - **Energetic:** Must be doing something. Enjoy several interests. Totally absorb themselves in something, causing the "Just A Minute" syndrome. Very focused. May cause them to over-commit. The need to constantly be doing something can cause a child to be misdiagnosed as hyperactive. We need to direct that energy in a positive way. Don't allow it be wasted.
 - **Clever:** Gifted children know what buttons to push. They can read people easily and be extremely manipulative. Do not say something to a gifted child unless you really mean it. They will remember and hold you to it!
- The intellectually and creatively gifted need to be encouraged and assured. They would rather work alone, unless in a group of other gifted children, because they require little direction and supervision. They need to be around other children like themselves to challenge them.