

General Characteristics of Gifted and Talented Learners

- ✓ Shows superior reasoning powers; thinking is abstract, complex, logical, insightful; can generalize readily from specific facts and can see subtle relationships; has outstanding problem-solving ability
- ✓ Shows persistent intellectual curiosity; asks probing/searching questions
- ✓ Shows exceptional interest in the nature of humanity and the universe; concern with social and political issues and injustices; idealism and sense of justice at an early age
- ✓ Wide range of interests, often of an intellectual kind; develops one or more interests to considerable depth
- ✓ Markedly superior in quality and quantity of written and/or spoken vocabulary; is interested in the subtleties of words and their uses; complex vocabulary and sentence structure for age; advanced comprehension of word nuances, metaphors and abstract ideas
- ✓ Reads avidly and absorbs books well beyond his/her years; often self-taught reading and writing skills as a preschooler
- ✓ Rapid learner and easily and retains what is learned; recalls important details, concepts and principles; comprehends readily
- ✓ Shows insight into mathematical problems that require careful reasoning and grasps mathematical concepts readily; enjoys solving problems
- ✓ Shows creative ability of imaginative expression in such things as music, art, dance, drama; shows sensitivity, and finesse in rhythm, movement, and bodily control
- ✓ Sustains concentration for lengthy periods and shows outstanding responsibility and independence in classroom work; preoccupied with own thoughts
- ✓ Sets realistically high standards for self; is self-critical in evaluating and correcting his/her own efforts; deep, intense feelings and reactions; highly sensitive
- ✓ Shows initiative and originality in intellectual work; shows flexibility in thinking and considers problems from a number of viewpoints; interested in experimenting and doing things differently
- ✓ Observes keenly and is responsive to new ideas
- ✓ Shows social poise and an ability to communicate with adults in a mature way
- ✓ Gets excitement and pleasure from intellectual challenge; shows an alert and subtle sense of humor
- ✓ Vivid imagination (and imaginary playmates when in preschool)

Traits of Giftedness

No gifted individual is exactly the same, each with his own unique patterns and traits. There are many traits that gifted individuals have in common, but no gifted learner exhibits traits in every area. This list of traits may help you better understand whether or not a child is gifted.

Cognitive	Creative	Affective	Behavioral
Keen power of abstraction	Creativeness and inventiveness	Unusual emotional depth and intensity	Spontaneity
Interest in problem-solving and applying concepts	Keen sense of humor	Sensitivity or empathy to the feelings of others	Boundless enthusiasm
Voracious and early reader	Ability for fantasy	High expectations of self and others, often leading to feelings of frustration	Intensely focused on passions—resists changing activities when engrossed in own interests
Large vocabulary	Openness to stimuli, wide interests	Heightened self-awareness, accompanied by feelings of being different	Highly energetic—needs little sleep or down time
Intellectual curiosity	Intuitiveness	Easily wounded, need for emotional support	Constantly questions
Power of critical thinking, skepticism, self-criticism	Flexibility	Need for consistency between abstract values and personal actions	Insatiable curiosity
Persistent, goal-directed behavior	Independence in attitude and social behavior	Advanced levels of moral judgment	Impulsive, eager and spirited
Independence in work and study	Self-acceptance and unconcern for social norms	Idealism and sense of justice	Perseverance—strong determination in areas of importance
Diversity of interests and abilities	Radicalism		High levels of frustration—particularly when having difficulty meeting standards of performance (either imposed by self or others)
	Aesthetic and moral commitment to self-selected work		Volatile temper, especially related to perceptions of failure
			Non-stop talking/chattering