

General Characteristics of Gifted Learners

Cognitive Abilities

- Rapidly acquires and retains new information with minimal repetition
- Understands complex concepts and abstract ideas well beyond age level
- Demonstrates advanced reasoning, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills
- Exhibits a long attention span and intense concentration when interested
- Possesses keen observation skills and a strong memory
- Reads early, often, and with deep comprehension

Creativity and Imagination

- Thinks in flexible, original, and inventive ways
- Generates many ideas or solutions to problems; enjoys brainstorming
- Visualizes complex relationships and patterns among concepts
- Creates, designs, or improvises using imagination and everyday materials
- Enjoys intellectual play and experimentation with ideas

Motivation and Interests

- Shows intense curiosity and asks deep or unusual questions
- Pursues personal interests with passion and persistence
- Becomes highly engaged in specific topics, sometimes to the exclusion of others
- Enjoys challenges and intellectual exploration
- Often prefers self-directed learning and independent projects

Social-Emotional Traits

- Demonstrates strong empathy and emotional insight
- Has high expectations for self and others, which may lead to frustration or perfectionism

- Sensitive to injustice and quick to point out inconsistencies or hypocrisy
May feel “different” from peers and experience periods of loneliness
- Displays a unique or mature sense of humor

Communication and Language

- Uses advanced vocabulary and complex language for age
- Communicates ideas clearly, fluently, and persuasively
- Understands and uses language subtleties such as puns, sarcasm, or idioms

Leadership and Independence

- Takes initiative and demonstrates leadership potential
- Prefers autonomy and may resist routine or arbitrary rules
- Thinks independently and often questions authority or convention

Developmental Asynchrony

- May develop unevenly across intellectual, emotional, social, or physical domains
- Intellectual ability may outpace emotional regulation or social maturity

Negative Behaviors of Gifted Learners

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| • obstinacy | • antisocial demeanor |
| • disruptiveness | • impertinence |
| • inferior / careless work | • emotional immaturity |
| • failure to follow directions | • over-involvement |
| • underachievement / nonproductive | • lack of judgment |
| • disinterested in skills development | • hide ability in order to “fit in” |
| • arrogant | • lack effort skills |
| • lack of strategies to deal with failure | • lack problem-solving skills |
| • poor study habits | • egotistical |
| • disorganized | • impatient with others |

What Happens When Needs Are Not Met

- lower total test scores
- inferior student performance
- impertinence
- disruptiveness
- underachievement / nonproductive
- parent pressures
- depression
- insecurity
- loss of social capital
- loss of academic confidence