Characteristics of Gifted Learners

Gifted learners may demonstrate some or many of the following characteristics:

- Advanced levels of comprehension.
- Unusually varied interests and have a high degree of curiosity.
- Interests are often both eclectic and intensely focused.
- Need little external motivation to follow through in work that excites them.
- Have a high degree of heterogeneity in their abilities.
- Have the ability to elaborate and the ability to produce new processes, ideas, responses or other embellishments to a basic idea, situation or problem.
- Need freedom and individuality in study.
- Are willing to examine the unusual and are highly inquisitive.
- Have a large and advanced vocabulary.
- Have a capacity for retaining and processing information.
- See direct and novel relationships between known and new information.
- Can generate original ideas and solutions.
- Can become adept at self-evaluation with guidance.
- Have a high degree of initiative and intrinsic motivation.
- Are interested in many thoughts, ideas, societal problems, and topics usually associated with older students and adults.
- Are creative in many areas of study.
- Demonstrate leadership qualities.
- Prefer to be with older students who are closer to their mental age.
- Have a well-developed problem-finding ability.
- Have advanced verbal and reasoning abilities.
- Have a keen sense of responsibility, conscientiousness, and perseverance.
- Have a highly developed retention and recall system, and a long attention span.
- Display considerable drive to accomplish their goals.
- Enjoy challenges and enjoy learning new material and new ways of doing things.
- Are perceptive and observant beyond their years.
- Have highly developed imaginations.
- Learn things at an earlier age than other students, including the ability to read and to understand number concepts.
- Have a highly developed sense of social concern.
- Show interest and pleasure in intellectual pursuits.
- Learn things more quickly than other students and with less practice.
- Are better able to handle abstraction.
- Are fluent and flexible thinkers who can use many different alternative approaches to problem solving.
- Display a questioning attitude and seek information for the sake of having it as well as for its instrumental value.
- Have a highly developed moral and ethical sense.
- Are highly independent and like to work alone at times.
- Have good organizational abilities.
- Often prefer learning on their own to being taught by an authority.
- Adapt readily to new situations.
- Are ready to learn advanced content at an earlier age than other students.
- Gifted learners’ initiative, their ability to see relationships, and their curiosity lead them to learn more advanced material without formal instruction, thereby accelerating themselves in regard to the curriculum of the school and their own curricular pursuits.
- Are avid readers and often engage in in-depth studies in areas of their interest that coincide with school-based subjects, in whole or in part. Thus, they often have more or more advanced knowledge than is required by the text, the teacher or the planned course (curriculum) objectives.
- Demonstrate initiative and their curiosity leads them to learn more advanced (or a greater quantity of) content and skills.
- Demonstrate a high degree of perseverance and a long attention span in areas that interest them.
- Have a high capacity for retaining and processing information.
- Engage in a diverse range of learning activities and opportunities beyond those offered by the school, including activities sponsored by civic, social, and other educational agencies.
- Engage in long-term studies on their own and thus develop a high level of knowledge and expertise in one or more areas.