Characteristics of Highly Capable Students
How to Spot a Gifted Student

The gifted student
• Asks many questions and is very curious
• Possesses a large amount of information
• Has a good memory

But . . .
• Easily gets “off task” and “off topic”
• Is impatient when not called on in class

Source: www.teachersfirst.com/gifted/spot.html
How to Spot a Gifted Student

The gifted student

- Learns new information quickly
- Retains information easily
- Masters reading skills earlier
- Demonstrates strong abilities in math
- Displays unusual academic achievement
- Finishes classwork quickly

But . . .

- Is easily bored
- Can become disruptive in class
- Shows strong resistance to repetitive activities and memorization
- Completes work quickly but sloppily

Source: www.teachersfirst.com/gifted/spot.html
How to Spot a Gifted Student

The gifted student
- Is interested in many things
- Becomes involved in a variety of activities
- Is motivated to try new things
- Enjoys a challenge

But . . .
- May resist working on activities apart from areas of interest
- Leaves projects unfinished
- Takes on too much and becomes overwhelmed

Source: www.teachersfirst.com/gifted/spot.html
How to Spot a Gifted Student

The gifted student

- Thinks independently
- Expresses unique and original opinions
- Is self-motivated

But . . .

- Challenges authority
- Does not handle criticism well
- Does not work well in groups

Source: www.teachersfirst.com/gifted/spot.html
How to Spot a Gifted Student

The gifted student

- Uses higher level thinking skills
- Makes connections other students don’t see
- Considers unusual approaches to problem-solving

But . . .

- Tends to be absent-minded regarding practical details
- Forgets homework assignments

Source: www.teachersfirst.com/gifted/spot.html
How to Spot a Gifted Student

The gifted student

- Has strong sense of justice
- Likes to debate current issues and real life problems

But . . .

- Can be very critical of self and others
- Likes to argue a point
- Is perfectionist and expects others to be perfect as well

Source: www.teachersfirst.com/gifted/spot.html
How to Spot a Gifted Student

The gifted student

- Has sophisticated sense of humor
- Understands subtle humor
- Enjoys plays on words and satire

But . . .

- Easily gets carried away with a joke
- Has a tendency to become the “class clown”

Source: www.teachersfirst.com/gifted/spot.html
How to Spot a Gifted Student

The gifted student
- Demonstrates strong expressive skills
- Is sensitive to feelings of others
- Elaborates on ideas
- Shows skill in drama/art/music/language

But . . .
- Sometimes perceived as a “know-it-all” by peers
- Is sometimes “bossy” to peers in group situations

Source: www.teachersfirst.com/gifted/spot.html
Myth 1

Gifted kids are like cream that rises to the top in a classroom

Not necessarily. Gifted children can have hidden learning disabilities that go undiscovered because they can easily compensate for them in the early years. As time goes on though, it becomes harder and harder for them to excel – which can lead to behavior problems and depression.

Source: www.ri.net/gifted_talented/character.html
Myth 2

- **Gifted students are so smart they do fine with or without special programs:**
  They may appear to do fine on their own, but without proper challenge, they can become bored and unruly. As the years go by they may find it harder and harder as work does become more challenging since they never faced challenge before.

Source: www.ri.net/gifted_talented/character.html
Myth 3

- **Gifted & Talented Means the Same Thing**
  
  There is no rule that states that a child who is capable of scoring high on achievement testing (i.e. WASL) must be considered gifted. Such a child is most definitely *academically talented*. Further IQ and out of level testing must be given before we can define that child as gifted.

  At the same time, there is no rule that states a child identified as gifted should be *achieving* to high standards in the classroom. This type of stereotyping can do damage to both groups. Any child can benefit from enrichment or high standards. Intellectually Gifted children need a differentiated curriculum and possibly even a different environment.

*Source: [www.ri.net/gifted_talented/character.html](http://www.ri.net/gifted_talented/character.html)*
Myth 4:

- **Giftedness is something to jealous about.**

  This is a damaging myth. More often than not, gifted children can feel isolated and misunderstood. They have more adult tastes in music, clothing, reading, material, and food. These differences to other children can cause them to be shunned and even abused verbally or physically by other children. Experts in the field of gifted education are beginning to address higher incidences of ADHD and Spelling/Handwriting disabilities in the gifted population versus those in the much larger general population.

Source: www.ri.net/gifted_talented/character.html
Additional Research on Characteristics of Gifted Students
Ten Things All Administrators Should Know About Gifted Children

1. Gifted students are not all alike
2. Gifted students benefit from interaction with peers
3. Gifted students need various forms of acceleration throughout school years
4. Gifted students are capable of producing high level products in specific areas of learning at the level of a competent adult
5. Gifted students need to be challenged and stimulated by advanced and enriched curriculum

Source: National Association for Gifted Children / Joyce Van Tassel-Baska, Center for Gifted Education, College of William & Mary
Ten Things All Administrators Should Know About Gifted Children

1. Gifted students need to be instructed by personnel trained in education of gifted students.
2. Gifted students at elementary require differentiated staffing and flexible schedule.
3. Gifted students have counseling needs that require psychosocial, academic, and career preparation on an annual basis.
4. Gifted students have affective characteristics that render them vulnerable in school settings such as perfectionism, sensitivity, and intensity.
5. Gifted students in general have healthy social relationships and adjust well to new situations.

Source: National Association for Gifted Children / Joyce Van Tassel-Baska, Center for Gifted Education, College of William & Mary
General Behavior Characteristics of Gifted Students

- Many gifted children learn to read early, with better comprehension of nuances of language.
- Gifted children often read widely, quickly, and intensely and have large vocabularies.
- Gifted children commonly learn basic skills better, more quickly, and with less practice.
- They are better able to construct and handle abstractions.
- They often pick up and interpret nonverbal cues and can draw inferences that other children need to have spelled out for them.
- They take less for granted, seeking the “hows” and “whys.”
- They can work independently at an earlier age and can concentrate for longer periods.

Source: www.ri.net/gifted_talented
General Behavior Characteristics of Gifted Students . . . continued

- Their interests are both widely eclectic and intensely focused.
- They often have seemingly boundless energy and can concentrate for longer periods.
- They usually respond and relate well to parents, teachers, and other adults. They may prefer the company of older children and adults to that of their peers.
- They like to learn new things, are willing to examine the unusual, and are highly inquisitive.
- They tackle tasks and problems in a well-organized, goal-directed, and efficient manner.
- They exhibit an intrinsic motivation to learn, find out, or explore and are often very persistent. “I’d rather do it myself” is a common attitude.

Source: www.ri.net/gifted_talented
Learning Characteristics of Gifted Students

- They may show keen powers of observation and a sense of the significant; they have an eye for important details.
- They may read a great deal on their own, preferring books and magazines written for children older than they are.
- They often take great pleasure in intellectual activity.
- They have well-developed powers of abstraction, conceptualization, and synthesis.
- They readily see cause-effect relationships.

Source: www.ri.net/gifted_talented
Learning Characteristics of Gifted Students . . . continued

- They often display a questioning attitude and seek information for its own sake as much as for its usefulness.
- They are often skeptical, critical, and evaluative. They are quick to spot inconsistencies.
- They often have a large storehouse of information about a variety of topics, which they can recall quickly.
- They readily grasp underlying principals and can often make valid generalizations about events, people, or objects.
- They quickly perceive similarities, differences, and anomalies.
- They often attack complicated material by separating it into components and analyzing systematically.

Source: www.ri.net/gifted_talented
Creative Characteristics of Gifted Students

- Gifted children are fluent thinkers, able to generate possibilities, consequences, or related ideas.
- They are flexible thinkers, able to use many different alternatives and approaches to problem solving.
- They are original thinkers, seeking new, unusual, or unconventional associations and combinations among items of information.
- They can also see relationships among seemingly unrelated objects, ideas, or facts.
- They are elaborate thinkers, producing new steps, ideas, responses, or other embellishments to a basic idea, situation, or problems.
- They are willing to entertain complexity and seem to thrive on problem solving.
Creative Characteristics of Gifted Students . . . Continued

- They are good guessers and can readily construct hypotheses or “what if” questions.
- They often are aware of their own impulsiveness and irrationality, and they show emotional sensitivity.
- They are extremely curious about objects, ideas, situations, or events.
- They often display intellectual playfulness and like to fantasize and imagine.
- They can be less intellectually inhibited than their peers.