**Varied Characteristics of Gifted Students**

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| **Traditional Perception of a Gifted and Talented Student** | **Gifted and Talented Student from Poverty** | **ELL who is also a Gifted and Talented Student from Poverty** | **SPED/504 Student who is also a Gifted and Talented Student from Poverty** |
| **Learning: Use of Language** |
| Is highly verbal anduses advancedvocabularyExhibits richness ofexpression,elaboration, andfluencyUses complexsentences effectivelyNaturally usesmetaphors andanalogies to expressrelationships | May have limitedverbal skill and usesvocabulary limited toinformal languageExhibits richness ofexpression whenentertaining or tellinga storyUses advancednonverbal expressionMay lack cause andeffect relationships insentence structureUses figurativelanguage incomparisons topeople andentertainersMay try to shock teacher or peers to get attention | Displays limitedthoughts in English but may be rich in native languageExpresses languagenonverbally due tolimitations in nativelanguage and EnglishMay use inventivevocabularycombining bothlanguagesDevelops newlanguage quicklywhen given theopportunityGains languageproficiency through acycle of silence inorder to avoid errors in speech | Is highly verbal withadvancedvocabulary, but mayexperience greatdifficulty in writtenlanguageDemonstrates stronglisteningcomprehension andrecallMay use language ininappropriate waysand at inappropriatetimesCreatively findsalternative ways ofcommunicatingEasily learnscompensatory language systems, such as Braille, sign language |
| **Learning: Curiosity and Questioning Attitude** |
| Is inquisitiveDoesn’t accept information at first glanceAsks penetratingquestionsShows curiosity and inner drive for thorough,independent understanding | Is often obnoxiouswith questionsLikes to stump peopleMay enjoy questionsthat “shock” peopleQuestions authorityAsks questions thatfocus on relationshipsQuestions issues related to fairnessIs unwilling to followrulesMay demonstrate self-destructive behaviorsbecause of curiosity | Is curious and can learn to be independent, but stillvalues relationshipsAsks questions to learnand reinforce relationships and fairnessMay be culturallyconditioned NOT toquestion | Has a strongquestioning attitudeMay appear disrespectful when questioninginformation and factspresented by the teacherEnjoys active inquiry,experimentation, anddiscussion |
| **Learning: Preferences** |
| Thinks holistically; sees the big pictureMakes abstract andsometimes randomconnections | Benefits fromdiscovery learningThinks conceptuallyBenefits from use ofmanipulativesMakes concrete,sensory, and/oremotional connections | Benefits fromkinesthetic learningexperiencesThinks visuallyDoes not respond toaural input | Demonstratesexceptional abilities ingeometry, science,arts, and musicPerforms better withmore challenging orcomplex work; dislikes rote, fact, and skill level learningLoves construction,using computersimulations;demonstrates strengthin mechanical andspatial skills; is drawnto inventionsDemonstrates love ofand great skill at drawing, but may have poor handwriting |
| **Motivation: Sensitivity and Maturity** |
| Is concerned withright and wrong,good and badEvaluates andpasses judgment onevents, people, andthingsNeeds to seepurpose in activitiesand rulesPrefers older or adultcompany becauseof Intellectual needsMay not be accepted by same age peers and may feel isolated | Passes judgment on an unfair system and people representing that systemIdentifies with the antiheroUses situational ethics;right and wrong depends on the situationHas a more pronounced need to see purpose forfollowing rulesWithholds trust untilsincerity is provenIs more willing to accept new information oncetrust is establishedOften matures earlierthan age peers sinceaccepts responsibilities for othersIs sensitive to the feelings of those they likeMay be isolated frompeers by economicdifferences as well asgiftedness | Places highimportance on theneeds of the peergroup and/or familyWilling to defendthe needs of thegroupNeeds to hideacademicachievement if it isnot valued by thepeer groupSeeks sincerity, honestyMay be particularlysensitive to racialand/or culturalissuesMay be perceived as a loner due to cultural, racial, or linguistic isolation combined withisolation due to giftedness and socioeconomic status | Disguises low self esteem through immature behaviors such as anger, crying, disruptive behaviors, or withdrawalHas advanced ideasand opinions and isuninhibited inexpressing themIs highly intuitive andinsightful; may thinkand perceive multi-dimensionally(using all senses) |
| **Motivation: Interest and Persistence** |
| Has a wide range ofinterestsHas very focusedinterestsIs passionate aboutcertain topics to theexclusion of othersHas a wide range ofinterests that are oftenunrelated to schooltopics/subjectsIs unaware of manytopics that may potentially be of interestDemonstrates persistent, intense concentrationHas a long attentionspan in areas of interestIs often persistent inself-selected tasks | Is interested in thingsand ideas that arerelevant to their livesand personalrelationshipsLacks exposure tomany topics ofpotential interestPersists in areas ofinterest usuallyunrelated to schoolIs less aware of timelines and deadlinesHas difficulty stayingfocused due to random thoughts and ideasIs impulsive | Is interested in thingsand ideas that arerelevant to home andfamilyIs willing to complete tasks and maintain interest to make connections andbuild relationships | Has a wide range ofinterests that are notrelated to schooltopics and learningLacks motivation,interest, and patiencefor learning in areasthat do not interestthe studentDemonstratespersistence andconcentration inareas of strengths andinterestsHas very focused interests or a passion about a certain topic to the exclusion of all others—often not related to school topics |
| **Creativity: Sense of Humor** |
| Displays a keen senseof humorUses puns, jokes, andriddlesUnderstands subtlehumor and nuancesof language | Imitates people andevents, as a reflectionof sense of humorTells stories in colorfulwaysMimics accuratelyCreates original jokesOften seen as a class clownUses humor to dealwith stressful situationsand avoid conflict | Displays humorthrough the uniqueuse of language andresponsiveness | Uses humor to divertattention from schoolfailureMay use humor tomake fun of peers orto avoid troubleIs highly creative, fun-loving, and wittyDreams up clever jokes and storiesGrasps metaphors,analogies, and satire |
| **Affective: Criticism** |
| Is a perfectionistDoes not believe thatanything is ever goodenoughCannot finishsomething because itstill is not rightHas a strong self imageabout academic performance | May becomefrustrated because ofskill gaps or lack oflanguage to expressthoughts, feelings,and ideas because ofperfectionismExpresses frustrationsthrough acting out orwithdrawal fromteacher expectationsMay display low self image about academicsHighly sensitive to criticism | Seeks approval fromteacherIs especially sensitiveto criticisms from thepeer group andfamily | Is highly sensitive tocriticism; may notunderstandconstructive criticismIs highly critical of selfand others, includingteachersHas very low self esteemdue to focus on the disability—by the student and the system |

Source: Slocumb, P. D. & Olenchak, F. R. (2006). Equity in gifted education: A state initiative. Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency. <http://www.gtequity.org/docs/equity_in_ge.pdf>