



Gifted Characteristics

Have you wondered if your child is gifted?

There is no easy answer without proper assessment. A good place to start is with a characteristics checklist. Many gifted children share common characteristics. Knowing some of these will help guide you.

Some children will display only a few of the common traits, while others might exhibit many. Some gifted children may also have a learning disability (also known as “twice exceptional” or “2E”).¹

This list is a compilation of some of the most common characteristics of gifted children, when related to other children of similar age.

Characteristic	Description
<p>Asynchronous Development ² (also known as “Out-of-Sync”)</p>	<p>Considered to be the hallmark trait of giftedness, this characteristic describes the disparate & different rates of intellectual, emotional, and physical growth or development often displayed by gifted children. The higher the intellect, the greater the asynchrony.² <i>(Example: A 7-year-old may be able to interact on the same intellectual level as a 10-year-old, but may have the gross motor skills of a 4-year-old and the emotional maturity of a 12-year old. Each child’s asynchrony will be different.)</i></p>
<p>Early Language Skills ² In relation to other children of similar age, the child may have...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A highly developed vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> An early use of complex sentences & grammar <input type="checkbox"/> Early reading skills <input type="checkbox"/> The need for thorough responses to their questions <input type="checkbox"/> The ability to understand & carry out multi-step instructions <input type="checkbox"/> The ability to understand & participate in adult conversations
<p>Learning Abilities ¹ Gifted children appear to have a natural ease of learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to learn quickly, efficiently, effortlessly <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to become highly focused on a certain interest <input type="checkbox"/> Asks questions that show advanced insight or understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent memory and easy recall <input type="checkbox"/> Prefers reading to physical activity <input type="checkbox"/> Learns a new activity or skill with little instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced assembly fine-motor skills (Legos / transforming toys) <input type="checkbox"/> Creative and/or independent thinker

<p>Emotional & Behavioral ¹</p> <p>Gifted children are often more emotionally intense, sensitive, and empathetic than others of similar age.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> High activity level <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to think & talk fast <input type="checkbox"/> Strong leadership qualities <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to relate to older children & adults <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoyment of alone time <input type="checkbox"/> Appreciation of natural beauty & art <input type="checkbox"/> Remarkable, keen & sometimes unusual sense of humor ² <input type="checkbox"/> Impatience with others or themselves ²
<p>Hidden Gifts ¹</p> <p>Every child is different and will show their giftedness in different ways – including IQ tests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Testing is only a part of the identification process. <input type="checkbox"/> Some children do not do well on tests and may score right around the cut-off point of 130. <input type="checkbox"/> It is important to document your teacher’s input and your own insight and instincts to truly understand your child’s potential and unique (and maybe hidden) gifts. <input type="checkbox"/> Typically, schools do not test IQ until 2nd grade. Parents must be the primary advocates for early identification.
<p>Signs of Giftedness ¹</p> <p>Parents know their children best. A parent will likely see the signs long before anyone else – even though the parent may not understand what the signs are telling them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Gifted children are sometimes overlooked due to attention or motivation issues. Parents who understand the signs of giftedness can help teachers see beyond these conditions and insure that their own child’s potential and needs are not overlooked. <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional or behavioral problems relating to giftedness can be easily misdiagnosed. <input type="checkbox"/> If a child does not test into the gifted range, or is diagnosed with a learning disability, then it is vital for the parent to know and understand commonalities that gifted children share in order to advocate effectively.

For more insight on how your child thinks, learns, and reacts to stimuli, you can research these topics:

<p>Thinking & Learning Styles ²</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Auditory-Sequential (also, Concrete-Sequential) <input type="checkbox"/> Visual-Spatial
<p>Overexcitabilities ² (heightened response to stimuli)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual Overexcitability <input type="checkbox"/> Imaginational Overexcitability <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Overexcitability <input type="checkbox"/> Sensual Overexcitability <input type="checkbox"/> Psychomotor Overexcitability

An important resource for Florida parents considering gifted assessment for their child is the **Florida Department of Education Handbook for Parents of Gifted Students** (free download at: www.FLDOE.org/ESE/pdf/p-gifted.pdf).

Additional important resources for gifted children and parents can be found at: www.QuestGAC.org

If you have questions, please contact the **Director of Exceptional Student Education** at **352-797-7022** or contact the **Quest Academy Gifted Advisory Council** at Info@QuestGAC.org.

¹Palmer, David, Ph.D., *Parents’ Guide to IQ Testing and Gifted Education*.

²Webb, James, Ph.D., et al. *A Parent’s Guide to Gifted Children*.