

AN OVERVIEW OF THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND THE PRIMARY HALLMARKS OF CREATIVE GIFTEDNESS AND INTELLECTUAL GIFTEDNESS

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Abstract

Being creative refer to having the ability to create from the original ideas and being intellectual refer to the having the power of understanding, capacity for the higher forms of knowledge or thought. The paper briefly discusses the concepts of giftedness and talents and the general characteristics of giftedness and talents in details. The paper also discusses the primary hallmarks of creative giftedness which include (openness, inventiveness, distractibility, intuition and individualism) and intellectual giftedness which include (curiosity, focus, analytical creative thinking, advanced processing and independence).The paper also recommended that the teachers and parents should consider the general characteristics of giftedness and talents, the distinctions that exist among creatively gifted and intellectually gifted students so that they should be handled appropriately.

Keywords: Overview, General Characteristics, Primary Hallmarks, Creative Giftedness, Intellectual Giftedness

Introduction

Children with gifts and talents possessed some special abilities and extra talents that require special attention to be accommodated and nurtured by the specialists. Gifted and talented children display some certain behaviours that distinguished them from their non-gifted counterparts. However, there are some traits that make creatively gifted and intellectually gifted children differ.

There are so many definitions of giftedness and talents and it differs from society to society across scholarly writings, history, educational jurisdictions and culture (e.g., Sternberg & Davidson 2005; Phillipson & McCann, 2007; Foster, Porath, & Smyth, 2009). It is unlikely that consensus on a definition will be achieved given measurement issues, the dynamic nature of giftedness (Jackson, 2000), and the “mysterious” nature of giftedness as defined by high IQ (Mathews & Foster, 2009) Still, every culture holds excellence in certain domains in high esteem and nurtures those who demonstrate outstanding capability to become eminent thinkers, writers, artists, navigators, storytellers, hunters, or musicians who contribute significantly to their culture (Phillipson & McCann, 2007). This outstanding capability is often noticed in early childhood, accompanied by personality traits like intense drive, high energy and confidence.

Internationally the most widely used definition of giftedness and talent (though, in two decades ago.) among which are that of Gagne (2000) who defines gifted children as those who have high levels of innate ability, in any domain of human ability, that places them within the top 10% of their age peereven if their high potential is not yet being demonstrated as high performance.

Talented children, by contrast, are those whose abilities have already been translated into achievements, and who are currently performing at a level that places them within the top 10 % of their age peers. Gifts are natural abilities whereas talents are systematically developed skills.

Gifted and Talented children was also currently defined by Colorado Spring School (2020) to mean persons between the ages of four and twenty one whose abilities, talent and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs.

Characteristics of Gifts and Talents

The Characteristics of Giftedness Scale was originally developed in 1973 by Dr. Linda Silverman after 10 years of teaching and counselling experience with gifted and talented children.

The descriptors were selected to meet the following specific criteria:

- (a) representative of the majority of children tested;
- (b) applicable to a wide age range;
- (c) applicable to children of different socioeconomic backgrounds; (d) gender fair;
- (e) easily observed in the home environment;
- (f) brief and clearly worded for ease of interpretation by parents.

The characteristics of giftedness endorsed by the parents were compiled as part of a study carried out on 241 exceptionally gifted children. The children ranged in age from 2.5 to 12.5 years. The sample consisted of 112 girls and 129 boys. Over 80% of the sample was reported to fit 20 of the 25 characteristics.

The following characteristics were endorsed by 80% of the parents:

(I) **Learns Rapidly:** Gifted and talented children are able to learn rapidly and easily make connections, often jumping ahead of others. They often want to move on quickly and do not enjoy repetition.

(II) **Extensive Vocabulary:** The majority of gifted and talented children begin talking early (before 12 months old) and progress quickly through the stages. They can use complex sentence structures and are naturally able to understand difficult words and use them in the correct context. Some gifted and talented children are more interested in numbers than words or have a particular learning difficulty such as dyslexia and do not excel in this area.

There are also a small percentage of gifted children who are gifted late talkers. These children are able to follow complex conversations and respond accordingly (although still nonverbally). These children actually have an excellent understanding of language; but are not verbally expressive until much later than their peers

(III) **Excellent Memory:** Many gifted and talented children have excellent memories. They are able to remember facts after being told only once or twice. They can remember the way to places they have been to only a few times. Some gifted and talented children have very good detailed memories about things that happened when they were young. They may not have such a good memory for instructions they are given as their minds can get distracted before they carry them out!

(IV) **Reasons Well:** Gifted and talented children are able to reason well in discussions and choices. Although their decisions and viewpoint may not always agree with those around them, there is often a logical thought process leading to them. A disagreement with a gifted child can often leave the parent feeling as though they have been cross examined by a talented lawyer!

(V) **Strong Curiosity (asking questions):** As gifted and talented children have an inbuilt capacity to learn quickly and a good memory, they want to know as much as they can about many things. This means they ask many questions about things around them or related to one another. Some children ask lots questions

because they want attention and they have found that this is a good way of getting (mainly) positive attention.

(VI) **Mature for Age:** Their developed thinking skills and perception means that gifted and talented children often seem mature for their age. However, there are also times when gifted children behave very immaturely.

(VII) **Good Sense of Humour:** Gifted and talented children often have a well-developed sense of humour for their age. They are able to see irony in things and sometimes have a quirky view of things. They may develop the use of sarcasm and witty banter far earlier than their peers and this can sometimes lead to difficulties with friendships. Although adults will be able to appreciate and understand a gifted child's highly developed sense of humour, other children might not get the joke at all.

(VIII) **Keen Observation:** Gifted and talented children often pick up a lot of information from the world around them and their excellent memory means that much of this information is stored, leading to great observation ability.

(IX) **Compassion for Others:** Many gifted and talented children have great compassion for other people and are very perceptive to other people's feelings. This can cause them to become upset at times when confronted with suffering.

(X) **Vivid Imagination:** Whilst most young children are imaginative, many gifted and talented children have a vivid imagination, having pretend friends and creating characters for cuddly toys, although their imagination may be limited to a particular area of interest. They can invent complex, imaginative games that other children of the same age find difficult to follow.

(XI) **Long Attention Span:** Gifted and talented children are generally able to concentrate on areas of interest for long periods of time. They may have difficulty concentrating fully on something they find tedious and may look as if they are not paying attention (daydreaming or fidgeting); although if asked they can often repeat what is being said. Because their mind is working quickly they may seem to flit from one subject to another, although these may be logically connected in their thought process. As gifted and talented children learn quickly, they do not need repetition and this can cause them to become frustrated when asked to do more of the same.

(XII) **Ability with Numbers:** Gifted and talented children often have ability with numbers well beyond their age group. They can find it easy to grasp the abstract ideas in mathematics and can relate knowledge to new situations. However, it should be noted that some gifted and talented children are more interested in words and language or artistic pursuits than numbers and hence do not excel in this mathematics. Indeed, some gifted and talented children may have a particular learning difficulty with math and may require additional support to gain confidence in the subject. Without the correct support in math, there is the possibility that such children can develop a fear or hatred for the subject. This could hamper their chances and restrict their opportunities in their future career choices.

(XIII) **Justice and Fairness:** Gifted and talented children often appear to be overly concerned with justice and fairness. They understand the need for rules and they often hear the rule and adhere to it. They can get very upset when others are not sticking to the rules. This can sometimes become a problem during play times at school as other children may in fact enjoy breaking rules and pushing boundaries away from the restrictions of the classroom. Gifted children may require pastoral support to understand that not everyone shares their diligent observance of rules and that sometimes during play, it is ok to bend the rules as long as nobody gets hurt (both emotionally and physically).

(XIV) **Sensitivity:** Many gifted and talented children are emotionally sensitive, causing them to become angry through frustration, upset over 'silly' things or overly scared. Some gifted and talented children are also sensitive to loud noises, have a heightened sense of smell, taste or touch which can cause them distress.

(XV) **Wide Range of Interests:** Many gifted and talented children are interested in a variety of subjects, they soak up information and their knowledge and understanding of the world is exceptional from an early age. There are often passions about certain subjects that the child will follow, some temporary that they will learn about deeply for a short period and others that they will follow throughout life.

(XVI) **Ability with Puzzles:** Gifted and talented children are normally very good at problem solving. This shows itself from a young age with the ability to complete jigsaw puzzles beyond those recommended for their age. Often they need less prompting than other children and are able to work independently on puzzles that interest them, be they word-based, number-based or logic-based.

(XVII) **High Energy Level:** Some gifted and talented children have a high energy level from a very young age. This can impact upon sleep patterns from birth. As toddlers, these children can be difficult to handle and are constantly on the go. Children with high energy levels need a lot of physical exercise and may learn better outdoors or after exercise. Having high energy can mean that a child fidgets and finds it difficult to sit still, expect when they are fully engaged. This characteristic shows itself more when the child becomes agitated or excited.

(XVIII) **Perfectionist:** Some gifted and talented children have a tendency towards perfectionism, and for some this can mean they have a fear of failure resulting in them not wanting to try new things if they think their performance may fall short of perfection. Gifted and talented children can be very self-critical or become emotional if things don't go well in their eyes (even if others feel they did what was expected of them).

(XIX) **Passionate about Interests:** Whilst gifted and talented children may not always appear to be paying close attention, there are often very passionate in their chosen areas of interest. This can cause problems in school as they can become upset when an adult tries to get them to move on from their preferred tasks. This kind of intensity can be difficult for others to cope with but there are obvious advantages for the child as they get older and are able to focus.

XX) **Questions Authority:** Many gifted and talented children question authority and feel it is their right to do so because they may know better. Unfortunately, their manner can sometimes seem arrogant to figures of authority. For them, respect is not gained merely by being an adult, it needs to be earned. Adults can earn respect by listening to the child and acting fairly. It may take time for a gifted child to respect an adult; but at the same time, it is important for parents to reinforce the importance of following instructions set out by teachers as a persistent failure to do so will result in disciplinary measures. (XIX) **Avid Reader:** Many gifted and talented children learn to read easily (some very early) and enjoy different kinds of books to entertain them (imaginative fiction) and extend their learning (topic and nonfiction books). Many enjoy poetry because of the play with words and sounds and the different ways of making sense of the world. Gifted and talented children often progress very quickly from picture books and devour all kinds of reading material. Some gifted and talented children learn to read easily but enjoy a more limited range of material, for example only reading non-fiction for learning about particular topics. Some gifted and talented children may have a learning difficulty that prevents them from reading easily, such as dyslexia. NAGC has produced several fact sheets to help parents to further stretch gifted readers.

(XIIX) **Prefers Older Companions:** Many, but by no means all, gifted and talented children have difficulty finding friends within their age group. Many prefer the company of older children and adults to bounce their ideas off and play with. This is because they are ahead of their peer group in many ways and find those of the same age do not interest them. The peer group often find it difficult to join in with the gifted and talented child's complex games and may not understand their advanced language.

Creatively Gifted and Intellectually Gifted

Creatively Gifted: Someone who is creatively gifted is quick to think and makes connections between things. New information is linked to existing information in order to arrive at new insights and ideas. It is

a way of thinking that is not necessarily related to someone's IQ. So you don't have to be highly gifted to be creatively gifted. Creatively gifted people look at the world in a different way, which often makes them feel misunderstood. They are usually two steps ahead and excel seeing opportunities for improvement. They love to innovate and change and always challenge themselves to do so. In addition, they like autonomy and do not hesitate to teach themselves new things (Karolien 2020).

Intellectually Gifted: Intellectual giftedness, in turn, refers to the manifestation of potential and performance in academic-intellectual achievement domains. Sternberg (1984, 1995, and 1997) defined intellectual giftedness as an interaction among three aspects of intelligence (i.e., analytical, creative, and practical).

The Primary Hallmarks of Creative Giftedness and Intellectual Giftedness

Wellesley College (2005) described the following primary hallmarks of intellectual giftedness and creative giftedness are outlined below:

Traits of Creatively Gifted Children

- I. **Openness:** Creatively gifted children live in a world of endless possibilities. When intellectually gifted children will debate the correct answer, a creatively gifted child will think of multiple potential answers or hypothetical scenarios. They enjoy experimenting with thought and finding exceptions to the rules.
- II. **Inventiveness:** Creatively gifted children are excellent at connecting seemingly disparate concepts in order to generate fresh ideas. They see problems and situations from strikingly unexpected angles. At times, their opinions may seem bizarre or contradictory to outside observers.
- III. **Distractibility:** Because creatively gifted kids are constantly overflowing with ideas, they have trouble staying on task-even when engaged in voluntary activities. These children tend to start a lot of projects but struggle to complete the majority of them. They are also preoccupied with imaginative fantasy, rather than internalizing information. As such they tend to daydream a great deal.
- IV. **Intuition:** Intellectually gifted children tend to use a mix of abstract and logical thinking to solve problems. Creatively gifted children, by contrast, rely heavily on their intuition. They often feel like they “just know” the correct way to solve a problem, without being sure how they arrived at their conclusions.
- V. **Individualism:** Though all gifted children have a tendency to come across being somewhat acentric, creatively gifted kids are often radically different. They usually show a marked lack of interest in “fitting in”, preferring to pursue their own unique style of expression. This can make it very difficult for them to participate in group learning. As adolescents these kids are often drawn to niche subculture and unconventional modes of living.

Traits of Intellectually Gifted Children

- I. **Curiosity:** Where a bright child will focus on learning correct answers, an intellectually gifted child will challenge the “right” answers. This love for debate is sometimes misread as defiance.
- II. **Focus:** Though intellectually gifted kids may not appear engaged at school (generally due to boredom) they are typically highly focused on their own interests, they are often take on advanced projects and prioritize completing them, to exclusion of other obligations. They are goal driven individuals.
- III. **Analytical Creative Thinking:** Intellectually gifted children use their enhanced capacity for abstract thought to solve problems. They are excellent at applying complex concepts in order to generate meaningful results.
- IV. **Advanced Processing:** Parents of Intellectually gifted kids often report that they are started reading vocabulary very early, sometimes even before reaching school age. These children are sponges of

information and frequently display a large vocabulary, along with a penchant for memorizing facts and figures.

V. Independence: Intellectually gifted children generally enjoy working on their own, at their own pace. Most can also function in groups, however, as long as they are allowed to assume a leadership role.

Conclusion

This paper briefly explained the concepts of giftedness and talents and it also described the general characteristics of giftedness and talents in details. The paper also discusses who are creatively gifted and intellectually gifted children and the primary hallmarks of creative giftedness which include: Openness, Inventiveness, Distractibility, Intuition and Individualism and intellectual giftedness also include: Curiosity, Focus, Analytical Creative Thinking, Advanced Processing and Independence.

Recommendations

1. The general characteristics of gifted and talented students need to be understood by all teachers and parents.
2. Both teachers and parents of creatively gifted and intellectually gifted should try to find out the distinctions that exist between creative giftedness and intellectual giftedness.
3. Nurture both creative and intellectual habits among students with creative giftedness and intellectual giftedness.
4. The government should provide funds for scholarship for students with creative giftedness and intellectual giftedness.
5. There is need for involvement of researchers, administrators, counsellors and psychologists in identification and assessing students with creative giftedness and intellectual giftedness in schools.

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