Characteristics of Gifted Children

Positive Aspects and Possible Difficulties

There are many commonly cited characteristics of giftedness. In certain conditions, we may see a characteristic as being positive. In another light, it may appear to present a difficulty.

Characteristics	Positive Aspects	Difficulties
Perfectionism	Works hard to do a good job. Pays attention to detail.	May have unrealistic expectations, "perceived failure," super-sensitivity to criticism, work is unfinished because it never seems good enough.
Independence, nonconformity	Thinks for self, does not need approval of group to act.	May have a seemingly rebellious or disruptive nature, tend to challenge and question indiscreetly, resent the constraining structure of the classroom.
Perseverance	Strong power of concentration, Focuses on an activity until it is completed.	May be resistance to interruption or to a schedule, inflexible.
Originality	Comes up with new and creative ideas.	Behavior may be "off task." Desire to investigate and invent for oneself. Not motivated by traditional textbook approach to learning, rote learning, excessive group instruction, and teacher control.
Ability to analyze	Strong perception of relationships between ideas and events. Seeks to interpret and understand what is learned and experienced.	May tend to dominate discussions or activities or to resist curriculum and skill work that is repetitive. May become quite skillful in manipulating and controlling others.
` Verbal precociousness	Able to effectively articulate thoughts.	May have difficulty restraining desire to talk and develop listening skills and habits.
Curiosity	Strong desire to learn and explore.	May ask so many questions that it becomes annoying to others.
Sense of humor	Strong wit and unique way of looking at life.	May be the class clown.

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