

Promising Potential and Advanced Ability in Creativity and Leadership

The State of Maryland recognizes that children may be highly abled or gifted and talented in all subject areas. However, the state also recognizes that gifts, advanced talents, and abilities exist in non-academic areas including creativity and leadership.

CREATIVITY

Creativity is an area of giftedness that may be commonly overlooked in academic settings. Nevertheless, it is a recognized area of exceptional capability or potential in mental processes, talent, and advanced potential. Creativity may be identified in relation to a specific discipline or in general. While there are a few formal assessments to measure levels of creativity in children, creatively gifted and talented children may demonstrate several or most of the following characteristics:

- Prefers to create things
- Are highly imaginative
- Prefers complex and open-ended projects and activities
- Produces new or innovative ideas, methods, products, or performances in a variety of subject areas
- Produces detailed creative works
- Synthesizes and connects ideas and concepts
- Finds unique solutions to problems,
- Challenges existing ideas and products
- Is curious, inquiring and may be highly critical
- Self-Confident and takes calculated risks and can be individualistic in expression
- Demonstrates quick wit and humor
- Reflective and sensitive
- Enjoys visual and performing arts
- Shares unusual perspectives

Formal assessment tools / instruments include:

- Gifted Evaluation Scale, 3rd Edition (GES-3)
- Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS)
- Profile of Creative Abilities (PCA)
- *Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT)*

- *Gifted Rating Scales (GRS)*

The Brain and Creativity

Examples/ Vignettes from Susan K. Johnsen, author of Identifying Gifted Students: A Practical Guide:

"... a 13 year old boy, who, after failing two grades in his elementary school, has finally made it to the sixth grade. Though he doesn't turn in much work, his sixth-grade teacher has noticed that he seems to have a mathematical mind and catches on to new concepts easily. He aced a nationally-normed analogies test and built a working roller coaster in his backyard out of scrap lumber and electronic equipment..."

"... a high school student who is quite unique... he has been known to wear Christmas lights to school, to dye his hair several colors, and to wear red gloves to a band concert. Although he scores well on national tests, he performs at a minimal level in his classes. He loves music and he plays three different instruments proficiently. Outside of school, he has organized and led two jazz bands, recently cutting his first CD. The summer following his senior year, he was accepted to the Drum Corps International before beginning college."

GIFTED LEADERSHIP

Gifted Leadership is defined as the exceptional capability or potential to influence and empower people (e.g., social perceptiveness, visionary ability, communication skills, problem solving, inter- and intra-personal skills, and a sense of responsibility). Leadership may be identified in relation to a specific discipline or in general. (Kingore, 2015.) Although gifted leadership measures can be assessed, some commonly observed indicators may include several or most of the following behaviors and characteristics. Gifted Leaders may demonstrate:

- Advanced problem-solving capabilities, enjoys challenges
- Advanced critical and creative thinking skills
- Strong organizational skills
- Strategic planning skills
- Visionary ideas
- Skills and understanding of conceptual relationships
- Abilities in leading and manipulating change and action
- Adeptness in verbal expression
- Flexibility in thought and action
- Tolerance for ambiguity
- The ability to motivate others
- Reliability and acts in integrity
- Self confidence
- Persuasive communication

- Works well independently and cooperatively
- Persuasive and influential

"...a kindergarten child, full of energy and excitement like most kids her age, except that she is already reading at a fourth-grade level and understands mathematical concepts at a fifth grade level. She likes to play games with the other children but is interested in unusually sophisticated topics and eventually starts a learning center to teach her classmates about her unique fascination with these topics" (Johnsen, 2018) .

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Sources:

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Johnsen, S. K. (2018). *Identifying Gifted Students: A practical guide*. Prufrock Press Inc.