



Help Yourself...And a Student

5-Min. Prof. Development

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Gifted 107: Early Childhood Gifted Education

Gifted education research includes many characteristics of young gifted learners. Early development is often associated with giftedness, *but we must be careful not to assume that all children who read early or have strong language skills will be identified as a gifted learner.* Advanced language and vocabulary development is associated with children who have wide exposure to language-rich environment.

Characteristics include:

Cognitive	Social/Emotional
Alertness in infancy	Early empathy development
Faster pace in motor development milestones	Emotional intensity/sensitivity
Early language development	Frustration with own limits
Advanced vocabulary	Concern with truth and fairness
Interest in alphabet and symbols	Early awareness of differences
Intense curiosity	Mature sense of humor
Sustained attention	Perfectionism
Abstract thinker	Leader in cooperative play
Ability to transfer knowledge	Possible difficulty developing peer relationships
Generated new ideas	Recognize social/emotional competencies are not at same level as academic expertise
Creative/imaginative	
Excellent memory	
May be an early reader	

Benefits of Early Intervention:

- Increases motivation
- Prevents underachievement
- Helps with perfectionism
- Helps reluctant learners
- Assists students with undiagnosed twice-exceptionalities

Strategies that help young gifted learners:

- Teachers help young children to use their knowledge as a starting point and help them make connections; tune in and listen to children while at work and play through observation; Pre-Assess the students.
- Teachers appreciate and recognize the asynchronous development of young children; not assume every child can do what is 'typical' for children at that same age.
- Use standardized assessments to *inform* instructional decisions
- Form flexible small groups; young children change rapidly in all domains daily; emergent readers can advance three grade levels in one year
- Foster a literacy-rich environment focusing on opportunities to listen, read, speak, and write.
- Provide opportunities for young gifted learners to interact and collaborate with same-age peers as well as peers with similar cognitive abilities; Clustering students.

“A study of Kindergarteners that were reading 2 years ahead in Grade K and received differentiated instruction were still 2 years ahead in Grade 3. Similar Kindergarteners who were reading 2 years ahead in Grade K and didn't receive differentiated instruction were on grade level in Grade 3. This means they lost 2 years of potential growth.” - Mary Slade

Reference:

Hertzog, N. (2008) *Early Childhood Gifted Education*. Waco: Prufrock Press.

Slade, M. (2013) *Rtl and Gifted Education*. GT Symposium, Austin.

