

Academically Gifted Children

By Maggie Hogan

Is your child gifted? A few signs:

- Sense of humor
- Does things before peers
- Does things better than peers
- Very different perspective than peers
- Intense focus on one or two hobbies or interests
- Capable and mature for age
- Sees patterns - both concrete and abstract
- & more . . .

Intellectually gifted kids are not always the honors students with the best scores, though. Some kids don't test well and some gifted kids aren't academically inclined. Add to that: undiagnosed learning disabilities, boredom, behavior problems, hyperactivity, and you can see - it's not always easy being gifted!

Although testing is often the way people choose to identify gifted, don't completely rely on tests. If you choose to test, know your test giver, know your test(s) and one-on-one testing is more preferable than a group test.

Society's attitudes: It appears to be more acceptable in our society to be athletically gifted, or musically gifted, or artistically gifted, or even socially gifted (leadership), than it is to be academically gifted.

All gifted students are not the same: Use what you know about your child in order to guide and motivate him/her. Some students need to be prodded into working to their capabilities while others are perfectionists and need help to learn to lighten up. Learning styles and sensitivities must also be taken into account.

Don't neglect important things like character, spiritual development, service to others, fine arts, etc. Social skills should not be overlooked either. Does your child know how to behave in various situations? Are they comfortable with both peers and adults?

Skipping or Accelerating?

Choosing Curriculum

Mentoring: Look to mentors & be a mentor.

Gifted programs, classes, and schools.

Use resources and activities that incorporate higher level thinking skills. Examples:

- Making books and/or keeping notebooks
- Make a field guide using a camera, plant samples and reference books
- Make Home made games
- Encourage them to put on a play, write a newspaper, invent, or start a business, learn a language, volunteer, etc.
- Brainstorm! Think outside the proverbial box.

Opportunities

- Conversations with adults
- Interesting hobbies and/or collections
- Good magazines and other reading material (fiction and non-fiction)
- Exposure to other languages and cultures
- Free time to pursue their dreams and goals

Contests and Competitions: There are so many available the hard part is picking the ones for which you have time! There are well-known ones like the National Geography Bee, Scripps Howard Spelling Bee and Mathematical Olympiads, and there are a number of other contests that might be great fun and quite a learning opportunity for your student.

Resources

Gifted Children at Home: A Practical Guide for Homeschooling Families

By Maggie S. Hogan, Janice Baker, and Kathleen Julicher

Your guide to searching out the best possible options, resources, and hard-earned wisdom from women who've "been there, done that." Feeling frustrated in meeting your child's educational needs? This book will encourage you and give a firm foundation for making important educational decisions.
\$24.95 160 pages.

[Christian parents of gifted homeschooled students discussion group](#)