

Meeting the intellectual and emotional needs of gifted  
children in a school setting

Presented by

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## Is it a Cheetah?

by Stephanie S. Tolan

The child who does well in school, gets good grades, wins awards, and “performs” beyond the norms for his or her age, is considered talented. The child who does not, no matter what his innate intellectual capacities or developmental level, is less and less likely to be identified, less and less likely to be served.

A cheetah metaphor can help us see the problem with achievement-oriented thinking. The cheetah is the fastest animal on earth. When we think of cheetahs, we are likely to think first of their speed. It’s flashy. It is impressive. It’s unique. And it makes identification incredibly easy. Since cheetahs are the only animals that can run 70 mph, if you clock an animal running 70 mph, IT’S A CHEETAH!...

Certain conditions are necessary if it is to attain its famous 70 mph top speed... It must be healthy, fit, and rested. It must have plenty of room to run. Besides that, it is best motivated to run all out when it is hungry and there are antelope to chase.

If a cheetah is confined to a 10 X 12 foot cage, thought it may pace or fling itself against the bars in restless frustration, it won’t run 70 mph. IS IT STILL A CHEETAH?

If a cheetah has only 20 mph rabbits to chase for food, it won’t run 70 mph while hunting. If it did, it would flash past its prey and go hungry! Though it might well run on its own for exercise, reaction, fulfillment of its internal drive, when given only rabbits to eat, the hunting cheetah will run only fast enough to catch a rabbit. IS IT STILL A CHEETAH?

If a cheetah is fed Zoo Chow it may not run at all. IS IT STILL A CHEETAH?

If a cheetah is sick or if its legs have been broken, it won’t even walk. IS IT STILL A CHEETAH?

And finally, if the cheetah is only six weeks old, it can’t yet run 70 mph. IS IT, THEN, ONLY A “POTENTIAL” CHEETAH?

A school system that defines giftedness (or talent) as behavior, achievement, and performance is as compromised in its ability to recognize its highly gifted students and to give them what they need as a zoo would be to recognize and provide for its cheetahs if it looked only for speed.

# Eight Great Gripes of Gifted Kids

1.

No one explains what being gifted is all about - it's kept a big secret.

2.

School is too easy and too boring.

3.

Parents, teachers, and friends expect us to be perfect all the time.

4.

Friends who really understand us are few and far between

5.

Kids often tease us about being smart.

6.

We feel overwhelmed by the number of things we can do in life.

7.

We feel different and alienated.

8.

We worry about world problems and feel helpless to do anything about them.

Do you have other gripes that aren't on this list? Write them here:

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Giftedness is a greater  
awareness, a greater  
sensitivity, and a greater  
ability to understand and  
transform perceptions  
into intellectual and  
emotional experiences.

-- Annemarie Roeper

THE 'I'S HAVE IT:  
LIVING THE HONORS LIFE

INTENSE

INTROSPECTIVE

IMPERFECT

INTELLECTUAL

IMPATIENT

INDIVIDUALISTIC

# INTENSITY

A salient descriptor that characterizes the personality of a gifted child is intensity. Intensity takes many forms that can be both strengths and weaknesses. Recognizing and understanding these intensities can help toward improving the social and emotional life of the child.

- INTENSITY OF THOUGHT

“Her mind is always whirring.”

- INTENSITY OF PURPOSE

“Once he makes up his mind to do something, he’s not satisfied until it’s accomplished.”

- INTENSITY OF EMOTION

“She internalizes everything anyone say about her.”

- INTENSITY OF SPIRIT

“He’s always looking for someone less fortunate who needs help.”

- INTENSITY OF SOUL

“She asks questions that philosophers have asked for centuries and gets upset when we can’t give her definitive answers to them.”

## A Gifted Person

- A** Afraid that at some point I'll slip and do something wrong and everyone will notice.
- G** Guilty, when pressured into not doing my best.
- I** Isolated, when others make me feel left out of "the group."
- F** Frustrated, when I do something great and everyone laughs.
- T** Terrified, when I don't know the answer and everyone stares at me.
- E** Excited, when I create something that everyone appreciates.
- D** Disgusted, when my special needs are neglected.
- P** Privileged, when I get extra time during school to do something for myself.
- E** Embarrassed, when the teacher announces my grades.
- R** Relieved, when people don't laugh at me for getting less than 100%.
- S** Satisfied, when I am able to help someone else with something they don't understand.
- O** On top of the world, when somebody says they enjoyed my work.
- N** Nervous, when pressured to always be the best.

# Highly Gifted .....

## A Personal Response to Affective Issues of the Highly Gifted

Christine Badawy

I am highly gifted. I don't normally go round telling people or wearing a badge that identifies me as such. However, for the purpose of this article, I thought it better to be straight with you.

So to the topic under discussion: affective issues of the highly gifted. The thought did cross my mind to write profoundly on the topic, but then I quickly dismissed it. I'm trying to cut down on the number of deep and meaningful thoughts I have before breakfast. Instead, here is a spontaneous response to the topic that will be posed as a series of questions arising from my own experiences.

Why is giftedness linked to achievement, i.e. what

I can or can't do instead of what and how I feel?

Why do adults compare people to one another instead of seeing the individual person?

Do psychologists/psychiatrists and educators understand that when they use terms like intelligent, creative, oversensitive, hyperactive, achieving, disciplined, etc., their language reflects their values and not me?

Why can't adults readily accept that a four year old can have profound thoughts and breakdowns and to think seriously about suicide when I'm seven doesn't necessarily mean I'm depressed – rather I'm considering all my options?

Isn't it frustrating that the majority of teachers appear to be extraverts with no real understanding of the meaning of introversion or the needs of introverts?

Why do teachers act as counselors if they can't listen or stand not having a quick solution? No wonder I piss them off when they ask me what's wrong and then quickly move into solution mode instead of staying with me in the unknown?

Where are the adults who are willing to stand up and say I don't know; I'm still searching; I'm not sure if the questions ever stop; some questions just keep on coming back; I get more sure of myself as I age; etc.?

Who says that growing up gifted necessarily means wanting to get high grades, going to college, and getting a good job?

How hard would it be for schools to allow open access to quiet places to people like me who find being around people draining and need time to reflect?

What alternatives do educators and psychologists have to offer or am I expected to accept their frame of reference?

Why do psychologists say "I take your point but...?"

On the question of achievement (yes, it is one of my pet topics) – if I live a responsible life where I take care of myself and live in harmony with my fellow human beings and the environment, aren't I an achiever?

How come adults, especially parents, who put so much emphasis on gifted people fitting in, can't see that they're dealing with their own issues through me?

Why is it when I put aside the masks and talk honestly people feel threatened?

Do educators have any idea how frustrating school can be when I can't have the time needed for in-depth study or how irrelevant it becomes when I develop my own interests out of school?

Why ask me questions if you're not prepared to wait for or consider my answers?

Do teachers understand that while introverts hate calling attention to themselves they will go out of their way to be noticed when students are treated as a group and that this is not exhibitionism, merely a desire to be recognized as an individual?

Where are the alternative positive role models?

Have you noticed that adults expect kids to wear the label *gifted* when they won't?

Have you watched adults squirm and listened to their responses when you ask them if they're gifted? What does this say about how they define giftedness and what messages does this send people, especially kids, about giftedness and being OK?

Do adults understand that my black humor helps me deal with the intense pain, anger, and frustration that I feel?

How come parents and teachers persist in the belief that school underachievement will be reversed by taking away my passions or interest or by holding them to ransom; and then seem surprised when I lose the will to co-operate or even live?

I am intuitive; I know things and I don't know how I know, I just do. I can sometimes work out how I got certain response while others I have to just understand.

Can you really accept that I know what's best for me?

# Supporting profoundly gifted young people

## Our Mission

The mission of The Davidson Institute for Talent Development is to recognize, nurture and support profoundly gifted young people and to provide opportunities for them to develop their talents in positive ways to create value for themselves and others.

## How We Began

Founded in 1999, The Davidson Institute, a nonprofit operating foundation, was formed out of a concern that our nation's most gifted and talented young people were largely neglected and underserved. While studies indicate that thousands of children make up the profoundly gifted population, few resources exist to support these children and their families' unique needs. Profoundly gifted young people learn at an extremely rapid rate, are seldom provided an education that is appropriate to their abilities, and progress through other developmental milestones differently than their peers. As a result, they face special challenges at school, at home, and in the community.

## What We Do

The Davidson Institute strives to offer much-needed support to this population through services such as individualized support programs, assessment assistance, educational advocates, early college assistance, and online support.

## Programs and Services

- *Davidson Young Scholars*  
This individualized program supports the educational and talent development needs of profoundly gifted young people (selected between the ages 4-10 years).
- *Davidson Fellows*  
Students who demonstrate an extraordinary ability to develop their talents with the creation of a significant piece of work are recognized as Davidson Fellows and receive a \$50,000 or \$10,000 scholarship
- *Services for Talent Development*  
Services to support the talent development of profoundly gifted young people include: Assessment, Assistance, Educational Advocates, Early College Assistance, and PG-Online Community for parents to connect with parents, and students to connect with each other and adult role models.
- *Services for Professionals*  
Services for professionals seeking information about the profoundly gifted and their needs include presentations, in-service trainings, expert opinions, and referrals to experts in the field.
- *PG-CyberSource* – [www.pgcybersource.org](http://www.pgcybersource.org)  
A web-based searchable database of information and resources for and about profoundly gifted young people, with comments and insight from the profoundly gifted kids, their parents, and the professionals who serve them.

Parents and gifted educators are asked with increased frequency to instruct gifted children to conform to a set of societal standards of acceptable behavior and achievement – to smooth the edges of the square peg in order to fit into a “normal” hole. Spontaneity, inquisitiveness, imagination, boundless enthusiasm, and emotionality are being discouraged to create calmer, quieter, more controlled environments in school. An extension of this trend is reflected in an increase of referrals for medical evaluation of gifted children as ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). There is no doubt that gifted children can be ADHD. However, there are also gifted children whose “inappropriate behavior” may be a result of being highly gifted and/or intense.

This intensity coupled with classroom environments and curriculum which do not meet needs of gifted, divergent, creative, or random learners, may lead to the mislabeling of many children as ADHD. To avoid mislabeling gifted children, parents and educators may want to complete the following checklist to help them decide to refer for medical or psychologist evaluation.

## *Before Referring a Gifted Child for ADHA Evaluation*

By Sharon Lind, M.S., Ed. • Copyright 1996 • Reprinted with Permission

		Need More		
	Gifted?	Information	ADHD?	
Contact with intellectual peers diminishes inappropriate behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact with intellectual peers has no positive effect on behavior
Appropriate academic placement diminishes inappropriate behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate academic placement has no positive effect on behavior
Curricular modification diminish inappropriate behaviors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Curricular modifications have no effect on behavior
Child has logical (to the child) explanations for inappropriate behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child cannot explain inappropriate behavior
When active, child enjoys the movement and does not feel out of control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child feels out of control
Learning appropriate social skills has decreased “impulsive or inappropriate behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning appropriate social skills has not decreased “impulsive” or inappropriate behavior
Child has logical (to the child) explanations why tasks, activities, are not completed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child is unable to explain why tasks, activities are not completed.
Child displays fewer inappropriate behaviors when interested in subject matter or project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child’s behaviors are not influenced by his/her interest in the activity
Child displays fewer inappropriate behaviors when subject matter or project seems relevant or meaningful to the child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child behaviors do not diminish when subject matter or project seems relevant or meaningful to the child
Child attributes excessive talking or interruptions on need to share information, need to show that he/she knows the answer or need to solve a problem immediately	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child cannot attribute excessive talking or interruptions to a need to learn or share information
Child seems inattentive can repeat instructions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child who seems inattentive is unable to repeat instructions
Child thrives on working on multiple tasks – gets more done, enjoys learning more	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child moves from task to task for no apparent reason
Inappropriate behaviors are not persistent – seem to be a function of subject matter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inappropriate behaviors persist regardless of subject matter
Inappropriate behaviors are not persistent – seem to be a function of teacher or instructional style	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child acts out regardless of attention

If, after addressing these questions, parents and teachers believe that it is not an unsuitable, inflexible, or unreceptive educational environment which is causing the child to “misbehave” or “tune out” or if the child feels out of control, then it most certainly appropriate to refer a gifted child for ADHD diagnosis. Premature referral bypasses the educational system and takes control away from students, parents, and educators. By referring before trying to adjust the educational environment and curriculum, educators appear to be denouncing the positive attributes of giftedness and/or to be blaming the victim of an inappropriate educational system.

When deciding to refer, parents should search for a competent diagnostician who has experience with both giftedness and attention deficit disorders. It is never appropriate for teachers, parents, or pediatricians to label a child as ADHD without comprehensive clinical evaluation that can distinguish ADHD from look-alikes with other causes.

## Differences At-a-Glance

### Underachievers...

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... do not understand causes or cures

...are dependent and reactive

...tend to withdraw

...respect or fear authority figures

...need both structure and  
Imposed limits

...exhibit uniformly wear performance

...generally require family intervention

...may change over the long term

...are often perfectionistic; nothing  
they do is ever good enough

...have a poor academic self-image

### Selective Consumers...

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...can explain both the problem and possible  
solutions

...are independent and proactive

...tend to rebel

...see teachers as adversaries; can be  
contentious

...require little structure;  
need "breathing room"

...exhibit performance that varies relative  
to the teacher and/or content

...can usually be dealt with within school  
resources

...may change "overnight"

...are frequently satisfied with their  
accomplishments

...see themselves as academically able

What are some characteristics that underachievers and selective consumers may have in common? There are at least four:

1. Their socialization with classmates may be impaired.
2. They prefer a "family" vs. a "factory" classroom atmosphere.
3. They need to change both their behaviors and their attitudes.
4. They may need guidance or counseling to achieve academic success.

## For Underachievers

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Holding daily class meetings to discuss student concerns and progress

Directive atmosphere shows the student that the teacher is in charge and is competent

Daily/weekly/monthly written contracts of work to be completed

Free time scheduled each day to show importance of relaxation and free choice

Using instructional methods that are concrete and predictable

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Students are aware of specific rewards for attempting and/or

Allowing students to evaluate work prior to the teacher assigning a grade

Frequent and positive contact with family regarding child's progress

Verbal praise for any self-initiating behaviors

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Programmed instruction materials, where students grade their own papers immediately on completion

Peer tutoring of younger students in areas of strength

Small-group of instruction in common areas of weakness (e.g., spelling, sequencing, phonics)

Encouraging students to work on projects which don't involve a grade

## For Selective Consumers

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Eliminating (or at least significantly reducing) work already mastered

Allowing independent study on topics of personal interest

Non-authoritarian atmosphere

Permitting students to prove competence via multiple methods

Teaching through problem-solving techniques over rote drill

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Students help determine class rules

Assigning specific responsibilities for classroom maintenance or management

Teacher practices reflective listening – comments to students serve to clarify statements, not evaluate them

Students set daily/weekly/monthly goals with approval of teacher

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Self-selected, weekly goals for improvement determined between student and teacher

Private instruction in areas of weakness

Use of humor and personal example to approach areas of academic weakness

Familiarizing students with learning-style research and its personal implications for classroom performance

## important

Respect any and all responses. Especially for the underachievers in your group, it is important that you listen as a caring adult, receiving their comments without challenging or criticizing them. It may be a novel experience for them to speak about feelings and be listened to without judgment.

- ▶ Where in your life are you letting your intelligence show?
- ▶ Who in your life believes that you are an intelligent person?
- ▶ Do you believe you are intelligent?
- ▶ How do you know you are intelligent?
- ▶ Do you think a lot? How often do you lie awake at night, thinking complex thoughts and trying to figure out complex situation?
- ▶ Do you have trouble concentrating?
- ▶ What is the most comfortable part of school for you? The most uncomfortable?
- ▶ Do you like to be aware of what's going on around you?
- ▶ How would you rate your "social savvy" or "street smarts"?
- ▶ What are your feelings about being labeled an "underachiever"?
- ▶ What would happen if you started achieving in school?
- ▶ How would various members of your family react if you started achieving in school?
- ▶ When you underachieve who gives you attention?
- ▶ What do underachievers get out of underachieving? What makes it worthwhile to keep underachieving? (Ideas: attention from parents and teachers; peer acceptance; not being seen as a "brain;" being seen as a "rebel," not part of the system; not giving in to authority; distracting the family from worse issues.)
- ▶ Who are you being loyal to by underachieving?
- ▶ What are you sacrificing by underachieving?
- ▶ Do you feel you disagree with some part of the school system in general?
- ▶ How much are you in control of your school achievement (grades)?
- ▶ How much do you feel you are in control of your future?
- ▶ Do you sometimes feel discouraged about life in general?
- ▶ What would help you feel better about yourself and your life?
- ▶ How confident are you that you could do well if you tried?
- ▶ How confident are you that you'll be able to handle college, if you choose to go to college and are accepted?

# ***“Sage on the Stage” or “Guide on the Side”?***

## Sage

1. “I told you so.”
2. “You’re too young to really be in love.”
3. “It’s not the end of the world to get a ‘B’.”
4. “One day this’ll all be yours.”
5. “Do this.”
6. “It’s not up for discussion.”
7. “I’m disappointed in you.”

## Guide

- “Let’s see what you can learn from this.”
- “It’s no fun to have your feeling towards someone else ignored.”
- “It sounds like you’re upset with your grade.”
- “I respect that your career plans for yourself might be different than mine are for you.”
- “Here are some options. Can you think of others?”
- “What do you think?”
- “That probably wasn’t the best choice. What else might you try next time?”

## Ten Tips for Talking to Teachers

Are you having a problem with a class or an assignment? Can you see room for improvement in how a subject is taught? Do you have a better idea for a special project or term paper? Don't just tell your friends. Talk to the teacher!

Many students have told us that they don't know how to go about doing this. The following suggestions are meant to make it easier for everyone – students and teachers.

- 1. Make an appointment to meet and talk.**  
This shows the teacher that you're serious and you have some understanding of his or her busy schedule. Tell the teacher about how much time you'll need, be flexible, And don't be late.
- 2. If you know other students who feel the way you do, consider approaching the teacher together.** There's strength in numbers. If a teacher hears the same thing from four or five people, he or she is more likely to do something about it.
- 3. Think through what you want to say before you go into your meeting with the teacher.**  
Write down your questions or concerns. Make a list of the items you want to cover. You may even want to copy your list for the teacher so both of you can consult it during your meeting. (Or consider giving it to the teacher ahead of time.
- 4. Choose your words carefully.**  
Example: Instead of saying,  
  
"I hate doing reports; they're boring and a waste of time," try "Is there some other way I could satisfy this requirement? Could I do a video instead?" Strike the word "boring from your vocabulary. It's a buzzword for teachers.
- 5. Don't expect the teacher to do all of the work or propose all of the answers.** Be prepared to make suggestions, offer solutions, even recommend resources. The teacher will appreciate that you took the initiative.
- 6. Be diplomatic, tactful and respectful.**  
Teachers have feeling too. And they are more likely to be responsive if you remember that the purpose of your meeting is conversation, not confrontation.
- 7. Focus on what you need, not on what you think the teacher is doing wrong.** The more the teacher learns about you, the more he or she will be able to help. The more defensive the teacher feels, the less he or she will want to help.
- 8. Don't forget to listen.** Strange but true, many students need practice in this essential skill. The purpose of your meeting isn't just to hear yourself talk.
- 9. Bring your sense of humor.** Not necessarily the joke-telling sense of humor, but the one that lets you laugh at yourself and your own misunderstandings and mistakes.
- 10. If your meeting isn't successful, get help from another adult.** "Successful" doesn't necessarily mean that you emerged victorious. Even if the teacher denies your request, your meeting can still be judged successful. If you had a real conversation – if you communicated openly, listened carefully, and respected each other's point of view – then congratulate yourself on a great meeting. If the air crackled with tension, the meeting fell apart, and you felt disrespected (or acted disrespectful), then it's time to bring in another adult. Suggestions: a guidance counselor, the gifted program coordinator or another teacher you know and trust who seems likely to support you and advocate for you. Once you've found help, approach your teacher and try again.

# Just Asking...

## Questions to ask gifted kids

1. How much information (e.g. test scores, IQ scores) should parents tell you about your intelligence?
2. Is grade skipping a good alternative for gifted kids? Why or why not?
3. Is there anyone in your class not identified as gifted but who should be identified as gifted? What makes you think so?
4. Is there a circumstance under which you would not choose to earn an "A", even though you could? Explain.
5. Does having a mature mind make you more prone to stress? Explain.
6. In what situations is competition helpful? In what situations is it harmful?
7. Is it possible to spend too much time alone? Distinguish how you might know if this were the case.
8. Under what circumstances, if any, is disobedience a virtue in a child or adolescent?
9. How do you deal with adults who are your intellectual inferiors?

# High Achievers: What Price Do They Pay?

Learn to Raise High Achievers Without Breaking Their Spirits  
By CARLETON KENDRICK

They come to me with SATs pushing 1600. The valedictorians. The student leaders. The super-jocks. They're applying to Harvard. They're the children you want your kids to become.

For the past 17 years, I've been an alumni interviewer for Harvard. As part of its admissions process, Harvard gives applicants an opportunity to meet with one of its alumni. To personalize the process. To allow its applicants to "come alive," apart from their strategically packaged portfolios.

Acknowledging that most teens walk into these interviews with understandably heightened anxiety, my initial focus is on helping them exhale their fears and worries about impressing me. "We're here so that Harvard can get to know you a little better," I tell them. "There are no right or wrong answers. We're just going to chat for a while."

I try to get beyond their Miss America-like, rehearsed responses. I'm looking for clues as to whether they'd make considerate roommates, inquisitive scholars and generous contributors to Harvard's community. Most often, these frightened, pressured high achievers have trouble finding their own voice. Instead I hear them speak in the success-oriented words of their parents, teachers and college coaches.

## Running on Empty

He listed cross-country as a sport he took up in his junior year. No athletic endeavors had preceded his high school running. I asked John (all names have been changed) what had drawn him to distance running. He replied, "My school counselor told me it would look good on my transcript. Time was running out, and my junior year was the last year I could get a sport in before I sent in my

applications. I joined cross-country because everyone makes it who tries out." "Do you like running? Does it give you pleasure?" I asked "No," was his hollow reply.

Peter had scored two 800s on his SATs and was recognized as a National Merit Scholar. I asked whether he had ever challenged any of his English teachers' opinions in class. Looking down at the floor, he spoke softly. "Sure, I used to disagree lots of times. But every time I'd disagree with a teacher of a textbook, I'd get marked down for it. I learned it's better to tell teachers what they want to hear." Sadly, there was no anger or disappointment in his voice.

Sarah, class valedictorian and winner of numerous, prestigious math and science awards, spoke with a dull voice about her academic triumphs and her future. "Math and science have always been easy for me. I don't like them nearly as much as literature, but they're what I do best. I guess I'll major in them in college, get a graduate degree in them and then get an engineering job and get married. That's what my parents expect." Sarah was 17, a broken sparrow, dying to be middle-aged.

## Stressed for Success

Heard enough? I have. Over the past two decades, the children I've interviewed have become progressively more packaged for success. They've been advised and scared into believing that school's only purpose is to get the grades that will gain them admission into an elite college. College must then result in a degree that translates into a high-paying job and a secure financial

future. It's no wonder that a recently released American Council on Education survey of more than 348,000 college freshmen reports that, "Academic credentials, rather than a love of learning, seem to be their motivation." Shame on us all.

## What Parents Can Do

How do you raise kids to be high achievers without their suffering anxiety, dread and abject resignation?

Stop hurrying and stealing their childhood, structuring and scheduling their every waking moment. Read or reread David Elkind's cautionary book, "The Hurried Child: Growing Up Too Fast Too Soon" (Perseus Books)

Don't frighten them into believing in your master plan for academic and career success. Begin telling them as preschoolers that you love and admire them for who they are, not for the grades and achievements that they bring you. Encourage their own natural academic and extracurricular interests, regardless of whether they are deemed portfolio-advisable by costly college "handlers."

Urge them to volunteer and to serve others, and do so together as part of your family's values, not because it will look good on their college transcripts.

In short, love and support them as they challenge and search for themselves, fulfill their dreams and become the people they choose to be.

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*Carleton Kendrick is a family therapist and a contributing writer to <http://familyeducation.com>. For more advice about teen stress and raising high achievers, visit [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org).*

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**Note to school counselors:** Each issue of *ASCA School Counselor* magazine contains a column targeted to parents. Please feel free to copy this page and send it home with your students to provide their parents with your compliments.

## Gifted Adults: Their Characteristics & Emotions

Annemarie Roeper

- 1~Gifted adults differ intellectually from others
  - sophisticated, global thinkers with a penchant for complexity of thought
- 2~Gifted adults retain childlike emotions
  - they bring a childlike delight to discoveries and life in general
- 3~Gifted adults' views of self differ from others' views of them
  - others may ignore them, elevate them, or disparage them
- 4~Gifted adults are often drive by their giftedness
  - they have no choice but to think, explore, create, and strive
- 5~ Gifted adults need time for solitude
  - daydreaming and "alone time" are vital to their well being
- 6~Gifted adults search for meaning and purpose
  - in themselves and others, they need to ask "why?"
- 7~Gifted adults have many diverse abilities & interests
  - careers and hobbies are fleeting: "There is so much to learn and do!"
- 8~Gifted adults have strong senses of justice & morality
  - they live to serve: they distinguish justice from equality

## Quotes of the Ages...Quotes of the Sages

It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit.  
- Harry Truman

You may laugh because I am different, but I laugh because you are all the same.  
- Unknown

Be a first-rate version of yourself, not a second rate version of someone else.  
- Unknown

This is the final test of a gentleman: His respect for those who can be of no possible service to him. - William Lyon Phelps

The best way to judge a person's character is to see what he does when he think no one is looking. - Thomas Jefferson

You've got to stand for something or you'll fall for anything. - Unknown

If a man hasn't discovered something that he will die for, he isn't fit for life.  
- Martin Luther King, Jr.

I am not afraid of storms for I am learning to sail my ship. - Helen Keller

I know who I am and who I may be, if I choose. - Cervantes

If you think the world turned its back on you, take a look around. You probably turned your back on the world. - Unknown

The whole is more than the sum of its parts. - Aristotle

The road to the heart is the ear. - Voltaire

## **Way – y – y – y – y – y Beyond Description!**

We know, we know - you are unique. No one in the world has ever lived is exactly like you and, until cloning becomes popular, that is the way it will be.

But there are qualities that each of us has that others share - athletic, kind-hearted, thoughtful, spirited - and maybe some that are truly individual to you - perspicacious, pedantic, or idiosyncratic (look them up). In fact, if you try real hard, we bet you can come up with 100 adjectives that describe the person you are.

...And that, dear students, will be the **first** of your three tasks to complete this assignment: finding 100 adjectives that describe who you are, and listing them alphabetically for all to see (try to locate some words that no one knows - like perspicacious - as long as you learn what they mean!).

But, as you know, you have become the person you are thanks to others with whom you have come into contact - family, friends, teachers, strangers, even book characters!

So, your **second** task is to complete a short essay (One page or so, double-spaced) describing both an individual and an incident that has made you the person you are - in effect that explains the adjectives you chose to describe yourself.

Then comes the most revealing, creative and interpretive part: for your **third** activity you are going to take all 100 adjectives (or as many as you can fit) and create an illustration using only those adjectives that is connected, somehow, with the essay you just wrote. Perhaps it will be the image of a tree, because the person who you wrote about shared her love of nature with you. Maybe it will be a spiral, as the person you wrote about enters and re-enters your life occasionally and always teaches you something about yourself. Or, maybe the illustration will be a box of crayons, because the person you wrote about was in your life as a little kid and gave you some wisdom that you still possess today. Whatever...no drawing is wrong, because, after all, this is your life we're talking about.

Think deep, find some big words in a thesaurus or dictionary, and start revealing your life! Have a good trip!