


## UNLOCKING GIFTEDNESS:

An Introduction to Giftedness for Teachers in India



**Dr Inderbir Sandhu**  
Mind Path Consulting Services  
www.mind-path.com

## Agenda

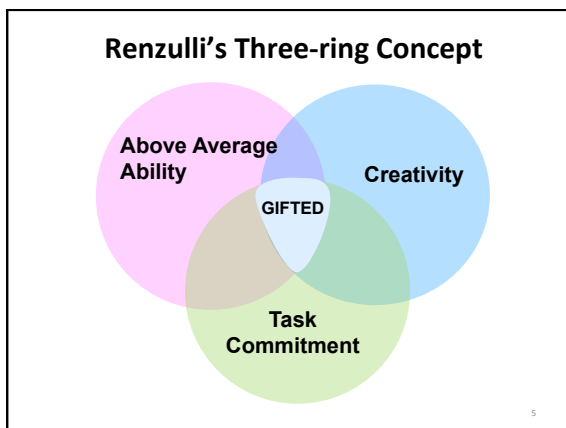
- What Is Giftedness
- Characteristics of the Gifted
- Some Misconceptions about Gifted Children
- Profile of the Gifted
- Awareness in India: Scenario in Schools
- Identification
- Curriculum Overview
- Twice Exceptional Students

## WHAT IS GIFTEDNESS


Definitions

### The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC):

“children and youth with demonstrated gifts and talents as well as those who may be able to develop their talent potential with appropriate educational experiences.”



## MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE



A grid of eight icons representing different intelligences:

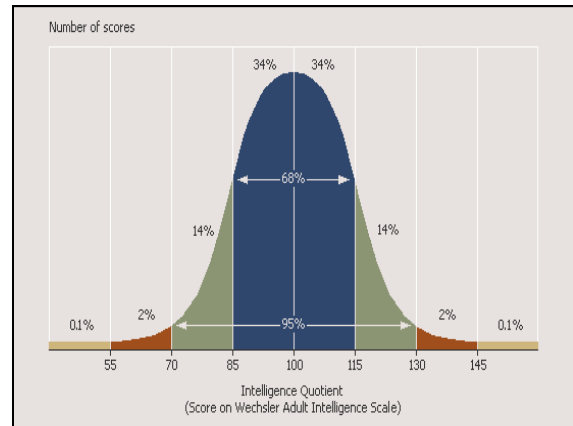
- Nature Smart (Naturalist)**: Green leaf icon.
- People Smart (Interpersonal)**: Two orange human figures icon.
- Number Smart (Logical/Mathematical)**: Blue percentage sign icon.
- Picture Smart (Spatial/Visual)**: Yellow eye icon.
- Self Smart (Intrapersonal)**: Yellow tree icon.
- Body Smart (Bodily-Kinesthetic)**: Red hand icon.
- Music Smart (Musical)**: Green musical note icon.
- Word Smart (Linguistic)**: Blue open book icon.

A red circle highlights the 'Picture Smart' icon with the text 'A 9<sup>th</sup> one? Existential'.

### To sum up...

- “Individuals who show evidence of **high performance capability** in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership capacity, or specific academic fields, and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities.”
- A young gifted child may exhibit abilities **earlier** or with **greater intensity** than the average child.

7



## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GIFTED

General and Distinct

9

## General Characteristics

- General intellectual ability
- Specific academic aptitude
- Creative thinking and production
- Leadership
- Psychomotor ability
- Visual and performing arts

10

## Common Distinct Characteristics

- Unusual alertness, even in infancy
- Rapid learner; put thoughts together quickly
- Excellent memory
- Avid & early reader; reads extensively hence, larger vocabulary
- Learn basic skills better, more quickly, with less practice
- Better able to construct and handle abstractions
- Ability to pick up and interpret nonverbal cues

11

## Common Characteristics (cont.)

- Take less for granted, seeking the “hows” and “whys”; highly inquisitive
- Work independently at an earlier age and can concentrate for longer periods
- Interests diverse and intensely focused
- Boundless energy, sometimes leads to a misdiagnosis of hyperactivity
- Keen and/or unusual sense of humour

12

### Common Characteristics (cont.)

- Preference for older company
- Keen powers of observation; eye for details
- See cause-effect relationships
- Often sceptical, critical, and evaluative. Quick to spot inconsistencies
- Vivid imaginations (and imaginary playmates when in preschool)

13

### Common Characteristics (cont.)

- Storehouse of information
- Intrinsically motivated
- Highly sensitive
- Idealism and sense of justice at early age
- Concern with social and political issues and injustices
- Preoccupied with own thoughts-daydreamer

14

- One aspect which sets apart gifted students from their fellow classmates is their **ability to make connections** which others often fail to see

15

BRIGHT CHILD	GIFTED LEARNER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knows the answers</li> <li>• Is interested</li> <li>• Is attentive</li> <li>• Has good ideas</li> <li>• Works hard</li> <li>• Answers the questions</li> <li>• Top group</li> <li>• Listens with interest</li> <li>• Learns with ease</li> <li>• 6-8 repetitions for mastery</li> <li>• Understands ideas</li> <li>• Enjoys peers</li> <li>• Grasps the meaning</li> <li>• Completes assignments</li> <li>• Is receptive</li> <li>• Copies accurately</li> <li>• Enjoys school</li> <li>• Absorbs information</li> <li>• Technician</li> <li>• Good memorizer</li> <li>• Enjoys straightforward, sequential presentation</li> <li>• Is alert</li> <li>• Is pleased with own learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asks the questions</li> <li>• Is highly curious</li> <li>• Is mentally and physically involved</li> <li>• Has wild, silly ideas</li> <li>• Plays around, yet tests well</li> <li>• Discusses in detail, elaborates</li> <li>• Beyond the group</li> <li>• Shows strong feelings and opinions</li> <li>• Already knows</li> <li>• 1-2 repetitions for mastery</li> <li>• Constructs abstractions</li> <li>• Prefers adults</li> <li>• Draws inferences</li> <li>• Initiates projects</li> <li>• Is intense</li> <li>• Creates a new design</li> <li>• Enjoys learning</li> <li>• Manipulates information</li> <li>• Inventor</li> <li>• Good guesser</li> <li>• Thrives on complexity</li> <li>• Is keenly observant</li> <li>• Is highly self-critical</li> </ul>

16

## SOME MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT GIFTED CHILDREN

Myths & Facts

17

### About Gifted Children: Myth or Fact

1. Gifted in all academic areas.
2. Giftedness is entirely a matter of hard work.
3. All children are gifted.
4. Children become gifted because their parents push them.
5. Gifted children will become eminent adults.
6. Gifted children do not have learning disabilities.
7. Gifted children are not aware that they are somehow different than others.
8. If you tell gifted children they have advanced abilities, they will become egotistical.

18

### About Gifted Children: Myth or Fact

9. May not be high achievers.
10. Emotional maturity may not be as advanced as their intellect.
11. May have emotional or interpersonal issues.
12. Does not enjoy demonstrating talents and abilities for others.
13. Parents can identify giftedness in their own children.
14. Most educators may not know how to work with gifted children.

19

### About Gifted Children: Myth

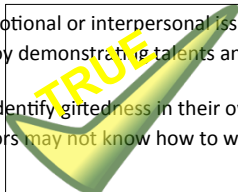
1. Gifted in all academic areas.
2. Giftedness is entirely a matter of hard work.
3. All children are gifted.
4. Children become gifted because their parents push them.
5. Gifted children will become eminent adults.
6. Gifted children do not have learning disabilities.
7. Gifted children are not aware that they are somehow different than others.
8. If you tell gifted children they have advanced abilities, they will become egotistical.

NOT TRUE

20

### About Gifted Children: Facts

9. May not be high achievers
10. Emotional maturity may not be as advanced as their intellect.
11. May have emotional or interpersonal issues.
12. Does not enjoy demonstrating talents and abilities for others.
13. Parents can identify giftedness in their own children.
14. Most educators may not know how to work with gifted children.



21

## PROFILE OF THE GIFTED

6 Types of Giftedness

22

## TYPES OF GIFTEDNESS

- TYPE 1 – THE SUCCESSFUL
- TYPE 2 – THE CHALLENGING
- TYPE 3 – THE UNDERGROUND
- TYPE 4 – THE ANGRY
- TYPE 5 – THE DOUBLE-LABELLED
- TYPE 6 – THE AUTONOMOUS

23

## TYPE 1 – THE SUCCESSFUL

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PERFECTIONIST</li> <li>• HIGH ACHIEVER</li> <li>• SEEKS TEACHER APPROVAL</li> <li>• NON-RISK TAKING</li> <li>• DOES WELL ACADEMICALLY</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACCEPTS AND CONFORMS</li> <li>• DEPENDENT</li> <li>• SELF CRITICAL</li> <li>• ENTRINSICALLY MOTIVATED</li> <li>• POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT</li> </ul>
---	--

24

### TYPE 2 – THE CHALLENGING

- CORRECTS TEACHER, DEFENSIVE
- QUESTIONS RULES, POLICIES
- HONEST, DIRECT
- HAS MOOD SWINGS
- INCONSISTENT WORK HABITS
- POOR SELF CONTROL, LOW SELF-ESTEEM
- HEIGHTENED SENSITIVITY
- CREATIVE
- STANDS UP FOR CONVICTIONS
- COMPETITIVE
- BORED, FRUSTRATED
- IMPATIENT

25

### TYPE 3 – THE UNDERGROUND

- DENIES TALENT, UNSURE
- GUILTY
- INSECURE
- PRESSURED
- DROPS OUT OF ADVANCED CLASSES
- RESISTS CHALLENGES
- WANTS TO BELONG SOCIALLY
- CHANGES FRIENDS

26

### TYPE 4 – THE ANGRY

- INTERMITTENT ATTENDANCE
- DOES NOT COMPLETE TASKS
- PURSUES OUTSIDE INTERESTS
- “SPACED OUT” IN CLASS
- SELF ABUSIVE, DISRUPTIVE, ANGRY
- DEFENSIVE, EXPLOSIVE
- ISOLATES SELF, POOR SELF-CONCEPT, DEPRESSED
- BURN-OUT
- CREATIVE
- CRITICIZES SELF & OTHERS
- ACADEMICALLY AVERAGE/BELOW

27

### TYPE 5 – THE DOUBLE-LABELLED

- POWERLESS
- INCONSISTENT WORK
- LOW SELF-ESTEEM
- ANGRY
- AVERAGE/ BELOW
- DISRUPTIVE OR ACTS OUT

28

### TYPE 6 – THE AUTONOMOUS

- APPROPRIATE SOCIAL SKILLS, SELF-CONFIDENT, SELF-ACCEPTING
- WORKS INDEPENDENTLY
- DEVELOPS OWN GOALS, ENTHUSIASTIC
- WORKS WITHOUT APPROVAL
- FOLLOWS STRONG AREAS OF PASSION
- INTRINSICALLY MOTIVATED
- STANDS UP FOR CONVICTIONS
- RISK-TAKERS, ACCEPTS FAILURE
- ACCEPTED AND ACCEPTS OTHERS
- CREATIVE

29

### Awareness in India

- Scenario in Schools

## Brief History of GE in India

- Stretches back to the 1960s, isolated in certain locations (Jnana Probhodhini, Pune).
- Provision is scant, over-reliance on *'learning models and assessment tools transferred wholesale from western contexts'*

31

## Other programmes

- 1962: Jnana Prabodhini Prashala in Pune (Mensa India established here in 1976)
- 1963: National Talent Search Examination (NTSE) introduced by NCERT
- 1994: Tribal Mensa Nurturing Programme
- 1999: Kishore Vaigyanik Protsahan Yojana (KVPY)
- 2008: Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE)

32

- 2013: National Association of Gifted Education India (NAGE-India) renamed PRODIGY – Promoting Development of India's Gifted Young (under the wing of National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS)  
– Partners: Delhi University and Agastya Foundation

33

## Concerns:

- Focus is on Math & Sciences
- Lack of awareness
- Lack of expertise, research
- Untrained teachers/educators
- Using of materials "wholesale" from western context
- Lack of interest
- India lagging behind other developing nations

34

## IDENTIFICATION

Spotting Them In The Classroom

35

## Is it a BIG DEAL?

- No big deal!
- Aren't they different from their peers?
- So they would have to stick out somehow
- They're like young Einsteins
- Easy peasy!

36

### As teachers...

- Gifted students -> finish work early -> become bored -> disrupt others
- There may be times when student will correct a teacher's mistakes in front of the class before considering the consequences
- You need to **show patience**

37

### IDENTIFICATION

- Why identify?
- Is it important to find out whether or not a child is gifted?

YES!

IKS/NAGG/CONF2016/RL

### Underachievement

Not identified

↳

not appropriately challenged

↳

loses motivation to excel

↳

**UNDERACHIEVEMENT**

39

**Note of Caution:**

**Difficult to motivate children later in adolescence, when they become accustomed to doing less than they are capable of accomplishing**

### Is there a biological difference between a gifted and typical child?

- Increased cell production that also increases synaptic activity
  - *Leads to an increased thought process, hence ability to process more complex thought*
- More prefrontal cortex activity in the brain
  - *Leads to insightful and intuitive thinking*
- More alpha wave activity in the brain and also sustain it longer
  - *Allows for more relaxed and focused learning with greater retention and integration*
- The brain rhythms of the gifted child occur more often
  - *Increased concentration, attention, investigation, and inquiry.*

41

### How To Identify?

- Objective Methods:
  - Individual intelligence and achievement tests (e.g., Weschlers, Stanford-Binet etc)
  - Student Cumulative Records (e.g., grades, national and standardized tests are sometimes used as data points during the gifted identification process)

42

## How To Identify?

- Subjective Methods:
  - Nominations: Self, Peer, Teacher, Administrator, Parent
  - Teacher Observations & Ratings: Learning & Motivation Scales
  - Portfolios & Performances: Portfolios or work that is collected over time
  - Student Educational Profiles: An academic or artistic case study approach could offer a more comprehensive process

43

## Curriculum for the Gifted

- An Overview

45

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

46

## Common Complaints

- Curriculum not challenging
- Instructional pace too slow
- Too much information is repeated
- Few opportunities to study personal interests or study in more depth
- Emphasis on mastery of facts, rather than thinking skills

47

- If you stand out, you will get cut to suit the rest or be in isolation!
- More often than not, intellectually gifted children are held back in their learning **to conform** to the pace of other children in their class



### Curriculum for the Gifted:

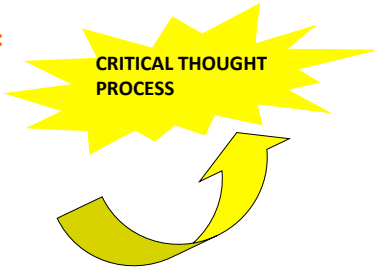
- Built on the **unique** characteristics, interests and needs of this targeted group
- Must be **differentiated & individualized**

49

### How Different is Differentiated Curriculum for the Gifted in Comparison with the Standard Curriculum for all?

**Main Features:**

- Acceleration
- Complexity
- Depth
- Challenge
- Creativity



50

### What Changes Can Classroom Teachers Make?

- Differentiated instruction
- Depth
- Compacting
- Acceleration
- Ask questions that are open ended
- Ask questions that require higher level of response

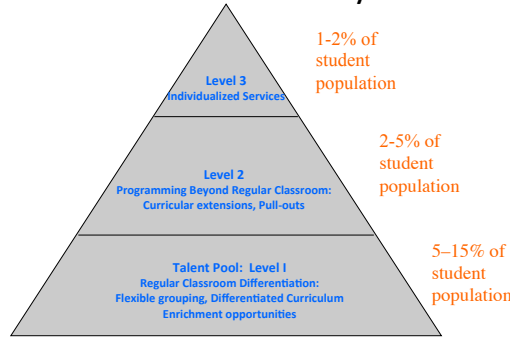
51

### What Changes Can Classroom Teachers Make?

- Group interactions and simulations
- Creative projects that synthesize knowledge and ability to manipulate ideas
- Group students of higher ability to work together for class work
- More research & project based independent work


52

### The Identification Pyramid



53

### Bloom's Taxonomy for the Gifted



54

### Points to Note ...

- Look at student performance across the years not just present year
- High achievers may not be gifted
- For gifted children, replace their curriculum with material they have not mastered (not just adding more work because they have finished their assignments early)

55

### MORE Points to Note ...

- Add breadth and depth to the curriculum
- Match the material to the child and not the child to the material

56

### TWICE EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN THE DOUBLE LABELLED

### Twice-Exceptional (2e)

- A student who possesses an outstanding gift (due to their intellectual gifts), but who also has areas of relative weakness (due to their special needs) can be both gifted and have a learning disability

58

### 2e students

- Trapped between two worlds
- Many have the internal motivation and belief in their abilities, yet lack of confidence in certain areas common with children with learning disabilities.
- Tend to have high expectations of themselves but continually frustrated by their disabilities
- May develop an **“overdeveloped fear of failure”**.
- Experience the paradox of feeling bored and confused at the same time - leading to increased frustration

59

### A Quick Lookout for Teachers

- A bright child who is “difficult” – they might act out or be the class clown or trouble maker.
- A verbally gifted student with a highly advanced oral vocabulary, but simplistic written language.
- A student who has mastered math concepts before they are taught, but struggles with computation.
- Asynchronous development (large splits between strengths and weaknesses).
- A student who loves to learn, but hates school.

60

## Teachers for the Gifted

Research shows that one of the most important factors in the determination of success for gifted students was a specific

**TEACHER**

61

Thanks

for listening!

- Dr Inderbir Sandhu
- Mind Path Consulting Services  
[inderbir@mind-path.com](mailto:inderbir@mind-path.com)



For more on giftedness:

[www.hoagiesgifted.org/](http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/)

<http://gtworld.org/index.html#top>

[www.brainy-child.com](http://www.brainy-child.com) (Singapore-based)

62