

TRAITS OF HIGH ACHIEVING, GIFTED, AND CREATIVE STUDENTS

HIGH ACHIEVING TRAITS	GIFTED LEARNING TRAITS	CREATIVE THINKING TRAITS
Fluent Thinking Patterns	Flexible Thinking Patterns	Original Thinking Patterns
Resist Ambiguity/ Uncertainty	Tolerates Ambiguity/ Uncertainty	Relishes Ambiguity/ Uncertainty
Intellectually Engaged	Intellectually Curious	Intellectually Playful
Absorbs Information	Manipulates Information	Makes Unusual Associations
Complies	Questions	Rebels
Sees Obvious	Sees Unforeseen	Sees Exceptions
Dislikes Chaos	Organizes Chaos to Learn	Creates Chaos to Learn
Technician	Expert	Inventor
Remembers the answer	Questions the answer	Asks provocative Questions
High level of Interest	Intense Level of Interest	Passionate Level of Interest
Memorizes Well	Guesses Well	Brainstorms Well
Works hard to achieve	Works little to achieve	May not work to achieve
Processes Ideas	Abstracts Ideas	Generates Ideas
Top of Group	Beyond Group	In Own Group
Analyzes	Transforms	Intuitive Leaps
Grade/Goal Focused	Perfectionism Focused	Possibility Focused
Comprehends	Transfers	Creates
Engaged Usually	Engaged Selectively	Engaged Daydreamer
Recognizes/Understands Complex/ Abstract Humor	Appreciates/Creates Complex/Abstract Humor	Relishes/Creates Off-the-Wall Humor
Task Completion Not Related to Interests	Completion of Tasks Related to Personal Interests	Broad Range of Interests Impedes Task Completion

Figure 5.6 Traits of High Achieving, Gifted, and Creative Students
(Shade, 2010 - Adapted from Kingore, Renzulli, & Sternberg)

The highly creative students are also characterized by idiosyncratic traits which can isolate them from their peers and be viewed as *disruptive to the teaching process*.

These traits include:

- more likely to question the status quo;
- do not like working with others;
- more independent of the judgment of others;
- may be viewed as opinionated or stubborn;
- seldom ask for student's or teacher's opinions;
- open to acting on impulses and emotions;
- not necessarily the best students academically;
- will stand their ground in face of criticism; and
- ridiculed by peers when ideas don't fit the norm.

Additionally, these students bring the opposing teacher-pleasing traits to the "learning stage" of the classroom, including:

- need the least training and guidance to work independently;
- optimistic when faced with complex, difficult tasks;
- generate a wealth of ideas and possibilities;
- demonstrate greater determination and persistence;
- more open and accepting of new ideas or information;
- accept responsibility for their actions and consequences;
- access analytical and intuitive thinking processes; and
- demonstrate convergent and divergent creative thinking.

These traits can be further explored by examining the Creativity Attribute Learning Log (C.A.L.L.) that appears in the Chapter 7, "Assessing Creativity." Creativity comes in varying degrees and appears in different strengths as the occasion elicits. Teachers need to provide support for the creative student to assist them in modifying their negative behaviors and enhancing the positive behaviors. Depending on the degree of negative traits exhibited, teachers may need to seek additional resources to support or aid the students. If this does not occur, the classroom environment and/or negative peer interactions may cause the student to withdraw from all levels of participation.

The influential effects of classroom environment on motivation and creativity performance are staggering. Research is reviewed which reveals that the typical American classroom is fraught with killers of intrinsic interest and creativity (Hennessey, 2004, v).

Teachers must encourage the development of the positive traits to increase the creativity of all students. One big first step forward is making students aware of their creative behaviors and thinking differences. When students and teachers discover these differences in themselves, it creates both a sense of excitement in the classroom as well as an atmosphere where acceptance of individual thinking differences is expected and becomes the norm. "We've lost a lot of the barriers that have to do with . . . various other characteristics. But there's still not sufficient recognition of *mental diversities*. And we don't all have to think alike to be communal and to live in a productive and satisfying world" (Nobel Laureate Vernon Smith, 2002).