



Understanding the difference between bright and gifted and creative children is a key piece to matching students with services from our Excel Gifted and Talented program. This document provides the context for moving forward in this process. Your child's teacher as well as all other teachers at REAMS and RMS-CES use this as a reference and we'd like you to understand it as well!

First, be clear about one thing: there is nothing wrong with being "just" a bright child! Often, in situations such as the one above, parents or teachers feel that the distinction is, in some ways, a slight on the child.

Often, bright children:

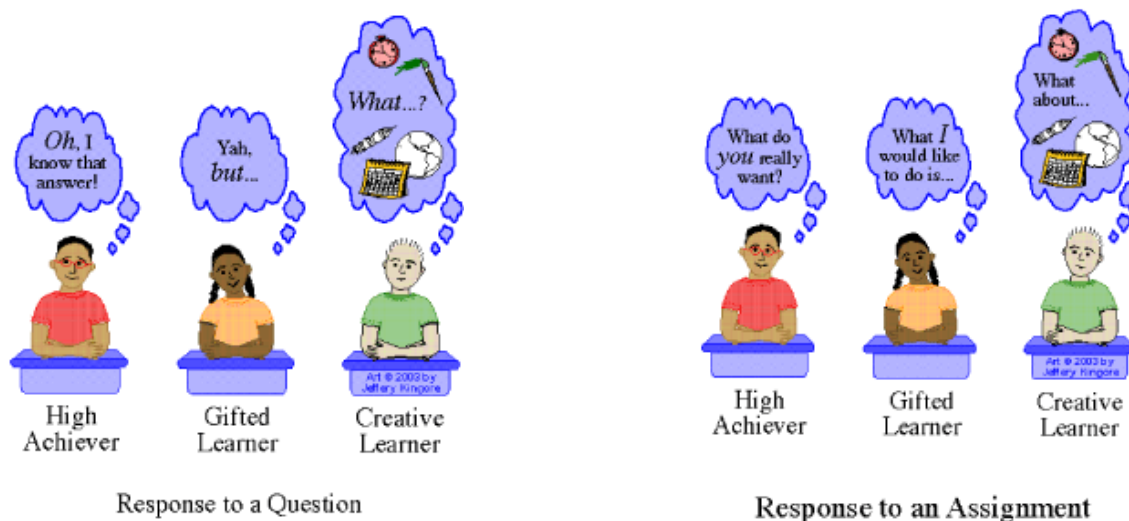
- are the ones who succeed in a typical school setting
- are the teacher pleasers (see cartoon below)
- the hard workers who receive praise for those efforts
- make few waves; acclimate well to class procedures and discussions
- are the ones with consistently high grades
- complete their assignments on-time, neatly, and correctly
- are the ones who sail through what may be offered in the typical classroom

These qualities often are mistaken as signs of giftedness. This distinction is worth discussion.

Janice Szabos developed an extensive comparison of bright and gifted in 1989. Addressing educator's concerns with several concepts, Bertie Kingore refined the concept more recently; adding a "creative thinker" column.

No column is intended to be mutually exclusive. For example, a high achiever might also be a creative thinker, and a gifted learner might also be a creative thinker; a creative thinker might also be a high achiever, and a gifted learner might also be a high achiever.

This three-column comparison emerged over several years while working with students representing all three of these groups. Hundreds of teachers and students reviewed and discussed the items as the comparison developed.



A High Achiever...	A Gifted Learner...	A Creative Thinker...
Remembers the answers.	Poses unforeseen questions.	See exceptions.
Is interested.	Is curious	Wonders.
Is attentive.	Is selectively mentally engaged.	Daydreams; may seem off task.
Generates advanced ideas.	Generates complex, abstract ideas.	Overflows with ideas, many of which will never be developed.
Works hard to achieve.	Knows without working hard.	Plays with ideas and concepts.
Answers the question in detail.	Ponders with depth and multiple perspectives.	Injects new possibilities.
Performs at the top of the group.	Is beyond the group.	Is in own group.
Responds with interest and opinions.	Exhibits feelings and opinions from multiple perspectives.	Shares bizarre, sometimes conflicting opinions.
Learns with ease.	Already knows.	Questions: What if...
Needs 6-8 repetitions to master.	Needs 1-3 repetitions to master.	Questions the need for mastery
Comprehends at a high level.	Comprehends in-depth, complex ideas	Overflows with ideas, many of which will never be developed.
Enjoys the company of age peers	Prefers the company of intellectual peers	Prefers the company of creative peers but often works alone
Understands complex, abstract humor	Creates complex, abstract humor	Relishes wild, off-the-wall humor
Grasps the meaning.	Infers and connects concepts.	Makes mental leaps: Aha!
Completes assignments on time.	Initiates projects and extensions of assignments.	Initiates more projects than will ever be completed.
Is receptive.	Is intense.	Is independent and unconventional.
Is accurate and complete.	Is original and continually developing	Is original and continually developing
Enjoys school often.	Enjoys self-directed learning.	Enjoys creating.
Absorbs information.	Manipulates information	Improvises
Is a technician with expertise in a field	Is an expert who abstracts beyond the field	Is an inventor and idea generator
Memorizes well.	Guesses and infers well.	Creates and brainstorms well.
Is highly alert and observant.	Anticipates and relates observations	Is intuitive
Is pleased with own learning.	Is self-critical.	Is never finished with possibilities.
Gets As.	May not be motivated by grades	May not be motivated by grades
Is able.	Is intellectual.	Is idiosyncratic.