

Profiles of the Gifted and Talented

Type I : Successful

This student is well adjusted to school and society. He learns well and is able to score high on achievement tests. He often becomes bored with school. It is difficult for him to assert himself and to express his feelings.

Rarely does he exhibit behaviour problems. He looks for approval and recognition from teachers and parents (extrinsic motivation). Rather than pursue his own interests and goals in school, he tends to seek structure and direction from the instructor.

The adults are pleased with him and his achievements. He is liked by his peers.

Type II : Challenging

This student is divergently gifted. He possesses a high degree of creativity and may appear to be obstinate, tactless or sarcastic. He often questions rules and challenges teachers in front of the class. He is competitive and does not conform to the system. He is frustrated because the school system has not affirmed his talents and abilities. He is struggling with his self-esteem and has poor self control. He has inconsistent work habits.

His interactions at school and at home often involve conflicts. He also challenges his classmates and therefore is often not welcomed in group projects; on the other hand, he can have a sense of humour and creativity that is very appealing to peers.

Type III : Underground

This student feels pressured, guilty and insecure. He is shy. He internalizes all conflicts. He denies his talent in order to feel more included with a non-gifted peer group. He may suddenly undergo a radical transformation, losing all interest in previous passions. He resists challenges and is ambivalent about achievement. It is difficult for him to assert himself and to express his feelings.

Adults see him as unwilling to take risks. He often suffers from the pressure of his peers.

Type IV : At risk

This student is angry with adults and with himself because the system has not met his needs for many years. He feels rejected. He may express this anger by acting depressed and withdrawn (burn-out) or by acting out and responding defensively. His self esteem is poor. He isolates himself in the class.

He doesn't complete tasks and his grades are average or poor, but he may pursue outside interests.

Adults may be angry with him and view him as a loser. He is seen as a drop-out. His peers reject and ridicule him or are afraid of him.

Type V : Twice-exceptional

This student has learning disabilities (AD/HD) or is physically or emotionally handicapped. He may show symptoms of stress and feel discouraged, frustrated, rejected, helpless, or isolated. His self esteem is very low.

His performances are low. He often seems confused about his inability to perform school tasks. He wants to avoid failures and is unhappy about not living up to his own expectations. He works slowly and is disorganized.

Teachers and parents only see him for the disability and often ignore his potential. His peers avoid him because he seems “weird”.

Type VI : Autonomous

This student has learned to work effectively in the school system. He creates new opportunities and goals for himself. He is critical.

He is self confident and self accepting. He is a passionate learner and works for his personal satisfaction (intrinsic motivation). He is willing to take risks and ready to fail.

Adults adore him and his abilities. He has a positive influence on his environment. His peers accept him.

References

- Betts, G. T. & Neihart, M. *Profiles of the Gifted and Talented* ; Gifted Child Quarterly, vol. 32 (2), 1988.
Betts, G. T. & Kercher, J. K. *The Autonomous Learner Model : Optimizing Ability*. Greeley, Col., USA, ALPS Publishing, 1999.