Creatively and Artistically Gifted Children

When a teacher is trying to decide how best to work with a creatively gifted child, it is important to first know the characteristics of creatively gifted students. Creatively gifted children are usually risk takers; they are open to new experiences and new, inventive ways of doing something. These children are also very aware of their creative talents. Whether it’s drawing, singing, dancing, etc. creatively gifted students usually have an intense love of engaging in creative work. They are intrinsically motivated; external rewards like grades do not motivate them. Creatively gifted students tend to be more introverted than their peers. They often want solitude, because some creative tasks, such as acting, require long amounts of concentration. Students with creative giftedness are often nonconformists as well. (Neihart & Olenchak, 2002)

Tips for Reaching Creatively-Artistic Learners

- Provide students with freedom and boost their motivation by allowing them to choose their own projects.
- Allow students the option to work independently on new material.

In This Issue

- Characteristics of Creatively and Artistically gifted children
- Academic and Social Emotional issues
- Intervention for addressing the needs of Creatively and Artistically gifted children

Characteristics:

- Curious
- Flexible
- Open to change
- Risk Takers
- Independent
- Maintains playful child-like tendencies even as a teenager
- High energy
- Intense Effort
How do Creatively and Artistically Gifted Children Look Academically?

Children who are highly gifted in creativity or art can also be challenges for their teachers both because the will learn and excel at a much faster rate than their average peers in the subject area in which they are gifted and because they often have a difficult time staying “inside the lines” that a teacher might desire. The children see things in ways that their peers may not and find it frustrating to have to do the same types of educational activities where there is little creativity allowed. Because of the boredom, the kids may act out and try to find outlets for their pent-up creativity. Students that are artistically or creatively gifted may also have a difficult time working with others because they have a very sure idea of what something should be like. (Sak, 2004)

Creativity is Visual

Learn more about the concept of visual-spatial learning. Make an effort to incorporate these techniques into your classroom by using visual examples as you teach. Anchor Charts are a great example of covering material while providing a visual representation of what you are covering in the lesson. It also provides a reminder. Visual-spatial learners often create a picture map in their brain this is how they store and learn new information as well as how they retrieve it for necessary use.

Parenting the Creative

Parents can also do several things to help their creatively gifted children thrive both in and out of school. First, they can provide the child with talent-enhancing opportunities, such as singing lessons and competitions for a musically gifted child. Secondly, parents can help provide access to gifted peers with similar passions and abilities.

Also, both parents and teachers can work together to pair the child with a mentor in the community who has been successful in the student’s area of interest. If a mentor is not available, creatively gifted children can read biographies about individuals who have been successful in their area of creative interest. (Neihart and Olenchak, 2002; Rimm, 1994)
Creative Interventions:

What are some intervention strategies teachers can use to meet the needs of creatively gifted students and help them flourish at school? Teachers need to realize that creatively gifted students think different than traditional students. They are visual-spatial learners.

Visual-spatial learners are "individuals who think in pictures rather than words...they learn better visually than auditory...they do not learn from repetition and drill" (Silverman, n.d.)

- Allow students to create visual representations of a concept.
- Do not require a large amount of writing.
- Examples: PowerPoint, PowToon, Models, Maps
- Avoid drill and repetition
- Provide visual models

How the Creatively Gifted look Social and Emotionally?

Creatively gifted students sometimes have trouble finding a supportive groups of friends and feeling like they "fit in." Sadly, some creatively gifted adolescents will hide their artistic talents so they will "fit in" with certain peer groups at school. (Schuler, 2003)

Another social/ emotional issue that many creatively gifted students deal with is mood disorders. Creatively gifted students are prone to developing mood disorders; these types of disorders are actually thought to be contributing factor in inspiring greater creativity. For instance, depression may play a key role in slowing down one’s thoughts and putting ideas into perspective. Edgar Allan Poe is a prime example of a highly creative writer who composed his best poems during his darkest moments in life. (Neihart & Olenchak, 2002).

Perfectionism is also connected to the creatively and artistically talented. Perfectionism can be productive, or enabling. One example would be a dancer who practices the same dance over and over again, paying attention to all of the details, to prepare for a performance. Another example is that of a writer who writes several drafts and makes multiple revisions to improve a story. However, for creatively gifted children, perfectionism often becomes counterproductive, or disabling. Some talented writers constantly struggle with writer’s block. (Schuler, 2003)
Work Cited:


Online Resources:

- Hoagies Gifted
  www.hoagiesgifted.org
- AL Association for Gifted Children
  www.alabamagifted.org
- National Association for Gifted Children
  www.nagc.org
- Innovation Excellence
  www.innovationexcellence.com
- Renzulli Center for Creativity
  gifted.uconn.edu/websites_parents/