

Davidson Institute for Talent Development  
***Educators Guild***

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# Battling the Myths in Gifted Education

# Myth #1

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*Gifted students will be fine on their own.*

# Myth #1

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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CLTKI9oYApI>

# Myth #1

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A few factors that could influence gifted students from not being fine could be:

- Disabilities
- Underachievement
- Asynchrony

# Myth #2

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*Gifted students always earn good grades.*

# Myth #2

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Grades are not always correlated with giftedness. A few factors that could influence grades:

- Interest
- Rigor
- Educational System

# Myth #2

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## Exploring Topics in Surprising Depth

Gifted students want to know the what, why, and how of topics of interest.

**Example:** Nuclear fusion

# Myth #2

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## How it can look in the classroom

- Intense focus for long periods of time when appropriately challenged.
- Difficulty transitioning when engaged in area of interest.
- Gloss over details in subjects not of interest.
- Exhaust topic and move on to new one.



# Myth #2

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## Insatiable Curiosity

Gifted students constantly explore new ideas and topics; often at levels above their chronological age mates.

**Example:** Never ending questions...

# Myth #2

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## How it can look in the classroom

- Ask difficult questions.
- They aren't challenging authority but they want to know.
- Often ask questions that have the answer "that depends...".

Teachers told me I was rude,  
Bumptious, overbearing, shrewd.  
Some of the things they said were crude  
I couldn't understand.  
And so I built myself a wall,  
Strong, solid, ten feet tall.  
With bricks you couldn't see at all.  
So I couldn't understand.

# Myth #2

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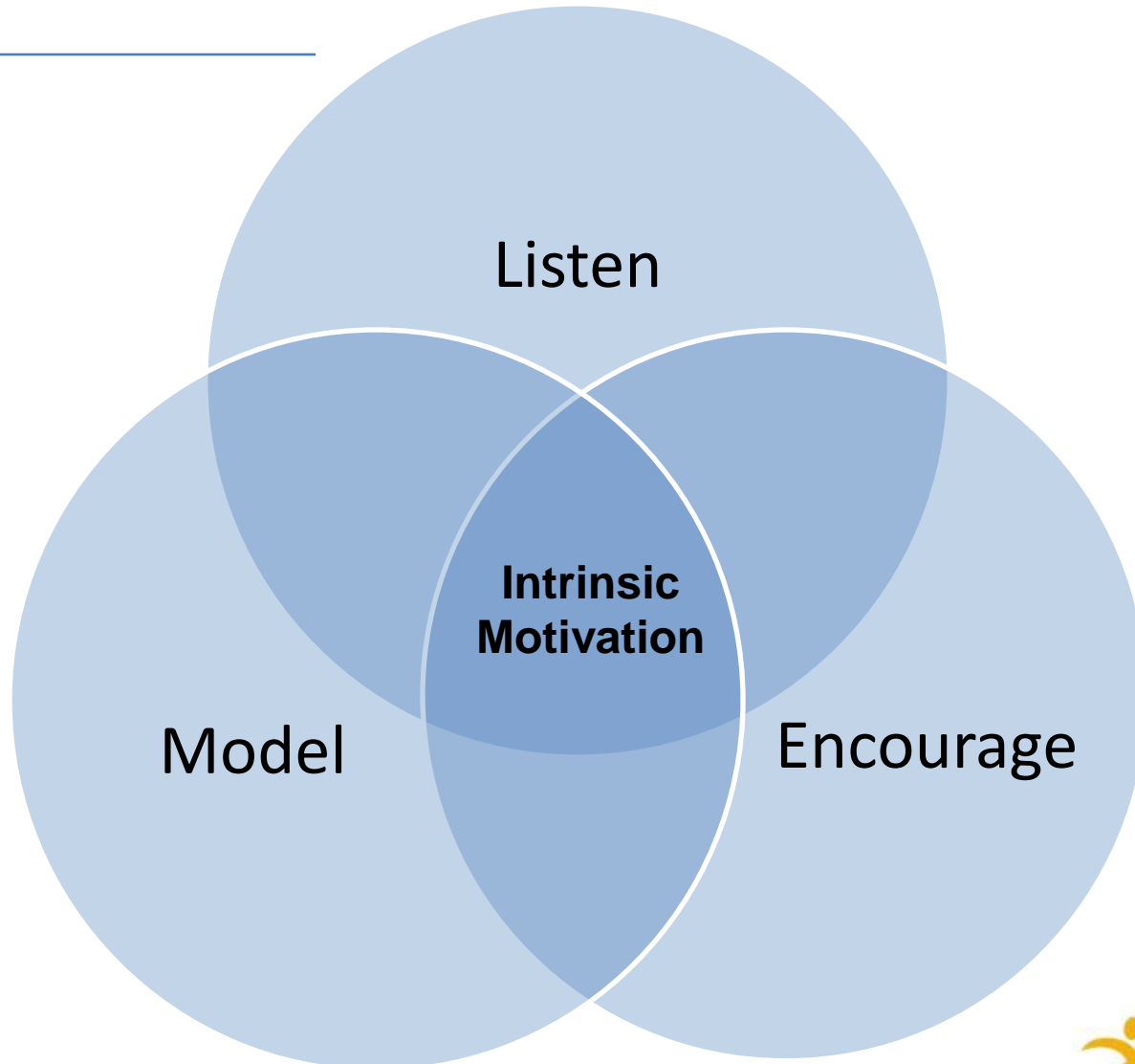
## Underachievement

When a discrepancy exists between a child's school performance and an ability index.

**Example:** A child is working at a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level with the rest of class, but has the ability to work at a 6<sup>th</sup> grade level.

# Myth #2

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# Myth #2

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**Listen** - Often times gifted kids' interests are not what we deem to be important. Remember that interest/importance is in the eye of the beholder.

**Model** - A child's motivation will likely be influenced by a model appropriate or inappropriate.

**Encourage** - Children to explore their interests and talents and take risks.

# Myth #3

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*Giftedness cannot coexist with a disability.*

# Myth #3

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In the field of gifted education, a twice exceptional learner refers to a gifted student with a co-occurring disability.

Disability may mask or hide abilities.

- Albert Einstein
- Bill Gates



# Myth #3

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## Misdiagnosis

Characteristics of gifted students can present similarly to various disabilities leading to an incorrect diagnosis.

**Example:** Rose, 9

# Myth #3

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## Example:

- Rose is a whimsical child.
- She rushes through her assignments if she actually starts them, and never turns things in on time.
- If Rose isn't blurting out answers during class discussions, then she is constantly asking questions, which may or may not be on topic.
- Rose is easily distracted and needs substantial redirection to the task at hand.

# Myth #3

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What diagnosis comes to mind?

- ADHD, ADD

Gifted characteristics which could lead to misdiagnosis:

- Boredom
- Understimulation; lack of challenge
- Extraordinary processing speed

# Myth #3

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## Extraordinary Processing Speed

Have an ability to learn and process complex information quickly, and perceive patterns and form connections.

**Example:** A typically developing child may take three weeks to master a concept, a gifted child may take one class period.

# Myth #4

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*Educating gifted students requires a wealth of time and resources.*

# Myth #4

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**Accommodations** can be adapting the original lesson or it can be going beyond the lesson for the students.

# Myth #4

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- Pretesting
- Ability Grouping
- Independent Projects
- Mentors
- Compacting Curriculum

# Myth #5

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*Gifted options are socially harmful  
for gifted students.*



# Myth #5

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Research suggests that giftedness and optimal social adjustment to age peers are often inversely correlated.

## **Example:**

4 year old: What did one candle say to the other candle?

7 year old: What?

4 year old: Are you going out tonight? HAHAHA

7 year old: Just stares at him.

# Myth #5

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## Importance of peers

- Chronological vs. Mental Age (asynchrony)
- With advanced intellectual development comes advanced concepts of friendship.
- Gifted children most always interact as well or even better with older students.

# Myth #5

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“It’s not that we have poor social skills, it’s that we have different social skills.” 15, girl

“It is nice to find friends that I can relate and talk to.”  
11, boy

“Being different can cause bullying so it’s cool to have friends that understand me.” 13, boy

# 8 Great Gripes of Gifted Children

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- 1) No one explains what being gifted is all about- it's kept a big secret.
- 2) School is too easy and too boring.
- 3) Parents, teachers, and friends expect us to be perfect all the time.
- 4) Friends who really understand us are few and far between.
- 5) Kids often tease us about being smart.
- 6) We feel overwhelmed by the number of things we can do in life.
- 7) We feel different and alienated.
- 8) We worry about world problems and feel helpless to do anything about them.

# Closing

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## Davidson Institute Programs and Services

- Educators Guild
- Davidson Young Scholars
- Davidson Fellows Scholarships
- THINK Summer Institute
- Davidson Academy of Nevada

Any Questions?

## Thank You



[www.DavidsonGifted.org/EdGuild](http://www.DavidsonGifted.org/EdGuild)

# Resources

## Books and Publishers

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

- *A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students* – The Acceleration Institute

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

- *Guiding the Gifted Child* - Webb, J., et al.
- *Re-Forming Gifted Education: Matching the Program to the Child* - Rogers, K.

[www.Prufrock.com](http://www.Prufrock.com)

- *Developing Math Talent* - Assouline, S. and Lupkowski-Shoplik, A.
- *Parenting Gifted Kids: Tips for Raising Happy and Successful Children* - Delisle, J.

[www.FreeSpirit.com](http://www.FreeSpirit.com)

- *Freeing our families from perfectionism* - Greenspon, T.
- *Teaching Gifted Students in the Regular Classroom* - Winebrenner, S.

[www.DavidsonGifted.org/DB](http://www.DavidsonGifted.org/DB)

- Resources > Browse by Topic: Parents and Books; Plus, lots of Articles on various gifted topics