

Using the Gifted Evaluation Scale – Third Edition (GES-3)

Background

The GES-3 is a normed behavior and characteristics instrument used to record gifted behaviors in students ages 5-18 years old. It was constructed by educators and the items represent educationally relevant behaviors. It relies on teacher observations of students in the educational setting. Three main uses of this scale are:

- to contribute evidence for identification of students who are gifted
- to identify goals, objectives, and instructional strategies when used in conjunction with the *Gifted Intervention Manual*
- to measure behavioral changes over time due to programming

The scale “is based on the most widely used definitions of giftedness in federal and state regulations.” It was designed to identify students in five components of giftedness. These are:

- intellectual
- creativity
- specific academic aptitude
- leadership
- performing and visual arts



An additional measurement of motivation can be determined by using specific questions from the general scale. **Observers should remember that it is unusual for a student to be gifted in all the components.** Rather the instrument provides a way to determine the areas of strength for a student.

It is also important to remember that the GES-3 observations are only one piece in a Body of Evidence to be used to identify a student as gifted. This piece of evidence comes from direct observations teachers' make of student behaviors in their classrooms so it is important that teachers are:

- familiar with the scale **before** being asked to rate students on it
- providing students activities/experiences that allow them to show the behaviors described in the scale
- familiar with the student's behavior patterns
- spending time with the student on a regular basis and over time

Preparing Teachers to Use the Scale (This will take about an hour.)

1. Present the background information about the GES-3 to teachers who will be using the scale.
2. Show teachers how this piece of evidence fits into the overall Body of Evidence and identification process within the district. Discuss how the final determination of giftedness will be made, usually by the RtI team.
3. Provide teachers training in the behaviors that are to be looked for when they are to use the scale. Have a discussion with them to review the key terms found in the scale (e.g. elaboration, originality, abstract thinking.) Discuss with them specific examples of these types of behaviors.
4. Remind teachers that this rating scale is based on a **child's age** not grade level.
5. Give teachers a list of Negatively Perceived Characteristics of the Gifted. A good source for this is from the *Kingore Observation Inventory* p. 6 or in the *Recognizing Gifted Potential, Professional Development Presentation, Slide 20* also from Bertie Kingore.
6. Discuss how some factors can impact the perception of giftedness (e.g. perfectionism, overreacting due to sensitivity, inappropriate use of humor.) Again, include specific examples in the discussion.
7. Instruct teachers that when they go to fill out the scale they should read the qualifier before the item and then rate the student. This process is well described on pp. 19 and 20 in the GES-3 technical manual. Remind teachers they are looking for the student's typical behavior and they are in the best position to see evidence of these behaviors and skills.
8. Ask teachers what questions they have about giftedness and the identification process and discuss these with them.



Using the Scale

1. Initially, have each teacher **independently** complete the scale for the student. Suggest they write anecdotal remarks for those items that they want to discuss with the other teachers.
2. Do the observations **over time**. An example is doing observations for two weeks with the behaviors in mind.
3. If a teacher does not observe the behavior in his or her classroom (e.g. excels in musical ability (#44), demonstrates superior artistic abilities) the coordinator will need to go to the specialists working with the child in the specific field to obtain a rating. **Do not** rate the student's behavior as not observed if the student **does not** have the opportunity to display the behavior in a specific classroom.
4. For a rating of 5 teachers should focus on the "consistently" aspect. It is rare for anyone to do anything "all of the time."
5. Remind teachers that for items like #34 the (e.g.) items listed are merely examples and may require talking with the student about activities outside of school.
6. Have each teacher turn in the rating scale to the coordinator who then reviews the initial scoring to see how convergent or divergent the ratings are. This gives the coordinator information with which to facilitate the follow-up group discussion.
7. All teachers who have completed the rating scale meet together for a final determination of the ratings for each question. The coordinator facilitates this discussion by giving each member a blank rating form and leading the discussion about what the final rating will be for each answer. For those questions where a wide variety exists about the rating ask participants to cite evidence for their ratings. On some questions participants will easily come to consensus. On others, it will take more discussion. When teachers are having a lot of difficulty with an item, skip it until later in the process and then go back to it. Allow about **1 hour** for this meeting. This time will be shorter when teachers are more proficient in using the scale. **Never average the scores of the individual raters.**
8. Once the final scale is completed, the coordinator completes the motivation form using the group's rating for the specified questions listed on the motivation record sheet.

Determining Standard Age Scores and Percentiles

1. The coordinator completes the final scoring of the scale based on the directions in the technical manual pp. 21-26. **Be certain to use the correct appendices based on the student's age and gender.** This instrument has different scales for males and females.
If you are uncertain about how to do this process consult with a person who has more test administration experience (e.g. special education professionals, district assessment coordinators, gifted consultants) and/or a computerized scoring tool is also available to purchase at <http://www.hawthorne-ed.com/pages/gifted/g1.html> for \$46.
Check the scoring several times to be sure it is accurate.
2. Read pp. 27-29 in the technical manual to help you interpret the results from the scale. *Again seek assistance from a gifted education professional if you are unsure about what the results are telling you.*
3. To further determine the needs of the student you can prioritize the ratings, list the numbers of the questions where 5's were obtained, then 4's, etc. to give a clearer picture of what the student's strengths are.

Using the Rating Scale for Programming

1. Results from the scale can be used as part of the Body of Evidence for identification as gifted.
2. Results should be used to create appropriate programming for the student. If the student is identified as gifted this programming is described in an Advanced Learning Plan. If the student is not identified as gifted the information can be used by the classroom teacher to differentiate learning that provides for the student's strengths and recorded in an RtI or student intervention plan.
The Gifted Intervention Manual has many interventions, linked to each item on the rating scale to help provide ways to meet students' needs.
3. The scale can be used at intervals throughout the year to see student progress overtime (e.g. quarterly) towards changing behaviors.

Final Reminder - The purpose of using an instrument such as the GES-3 is to determine the strengths of students and to provide programming that addresses these strengths.