



Gifted Characteristics: Visual Arts

Age	Typical Peer Group	Gifted Student
<p><b>Early Childhood</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students use materials provided.</li> <li>• Students generally look for guidance and direction to interact with materials.</li> <li>• Student’s art is more about experimentation than a specific representation.</li> <li>• Drawings are often not meant to be representational, but rather are records of hand movement.</li> <li>• Students may move from one exploration to another if their attention for the first exploration begins to wane.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These students may have more specific decisions about media, subject matter, inspirational material and working conditions than the average child.</li> <li>• Even young gifted artists may show advanced perceptual discrimination.</li> <li>• These students may prefer self-directed challenges.</li> <li>• While an average child’s experience at this age may be about experiment, a gifted artist may be more representational or specific with their choices and include minute details, unusual perspectives, and/or action.</li> <li>• Students may or may not move from one exploration to another, but an intensity of involvement is present.</li> <li>• Artistic giftedness may or may not be connected to being intellectually gifted – there are no research-based direct links at this time.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Elementary</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued interest in a variety of materials including those that require more fine-motor coordination.</li> <li>• Typically students will develop general drawing characteristics and schemas specific to age level – i.g. develop a baseline and skyline, rarely use overlapping, may not demonstrate realistic proportion, placement or perspective.</li> <li>• Students of this age are interested in and are able to do drawing from observation.</li> <li>• May not have imaginative or critical reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These students may approach new material with caution as a way of protecting themselves from ridicule or embarrassment in front of peers (recognition of success that has come from extreme practice may not be easily given up to try something unfamiliar).</li> <li>• Artistically gifted children may be prolific with their work and may have more ideas than they can find time to do. The degree of visual fluency (number of ideas or variations) can be many.</li> </ul> <p><i>Other characteristics may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Extended concentration (the ability to stay with an artistic problem longer than others because there are many possibilities to explore).</li> <li>○ Rapidity of development or rapid acceleration through the developmental stages of drawing that may be so fast that stages appear to be skipped.</li> <li>○ Complexity and elaboration of a child’s schemas.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The degree of explorations with media.</li> <li>○ Advanced technical skill and/or perceptual acuity (super accurate sensibility or ability to accurately perceive information from the senses).</li> <li>○ Random improvisation including exploring doodles, drawn shapes, patterns, lines which may in fact be a type of artistic research.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Secondary</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students may contextualize new information to make it relevant to students’ lives.</li> <li>● Students may make connections to the world beyond the classroom.</li> <li>● Students may use basic figurative language and symbols.</li> <li>● Students may begin to develop visual metaphors.</li> <li>● Students may work thematically with encouragement.</li> <li>● Student may begin to be reflective about their work.</li> <li>● Students may be encouraged to work with an inquiry-based approach.</li> <li>● Student may begin to integrate skill and conceptual considerations.</li> <li>● Skill and technical ability is commiserate with opportunities available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Some traits of the exceptionally artistically creative that are viewed as positive characteristics are being curious, open-minded, energetic, artistic and having a keen sense of humor. Other dispositional factors can challenge teachers’ tolerance levels, such as questioning rules, disorganization, absentmindedness, and a tendency to be emotional.</li> <li>● Students may show a range of multidimensional processes that includes knowledge of art concepts and traditions in a culture, highly developed visual thinking skills, and intrinsic motivation.</li> <li>● Students may exhibit decisions and actions that are both purposeful and not predictable.</li> <li>● Student outputs can be individual where materials, forms, and cultural conventions are fused with the artist’s personal history and emotions.</li> <li>● Students may create something that has never before existed in exactly that form, which may not be related to drawing ability but more associated with original ideas or innovations.</li> <li>● Those less creative may produce drawings that are realistic without much inventiveness, whereas more creative students find problems and attempt to solve them by producing novel solutions with advanced representational skills in traditional and new media.</li> <li>● Problem-finding and problem-solving, being emotionally involved, and focusing on personal visions when making art projects.</li> <li>● There may be a large volume of works over a sustained period of time along with thematically specialized work.</li> <li>● Students’ methods of discovery, visualization techniques, and ways they seek productive questions are often far better indicators of talented creative abilities than specific solutions to art problems.</li> </ul>



- Adapted from *Child Development and Arts Education: A Review of Current Research and Best Practices*, prepared by the College Board for The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (January, 2012).
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