

PRAEDITUS

Latin praeditus adj. I cl. meaning gifted

A publication of Allen ISD Gifted and Talented Services

Developing Cultural Context

Books are written, cities are developed, and inventions are created but they are always influenced by previous societies. Therefore, it is important to consider cultural context in discussing new developments. Culture can refer to the beliefs, customs, values, and activities of any particular group of people at a particular time.

A well-respected journalism teacher tells her classes every year that to be culturally literate and understand cultural context, they should all watch the American Film Institute's Top 100 films... not a bad idea!

How do we develop cultural context in our children? By regularly talking and engaging them with the past... with history. That is a critical component of gifted studies. Studying the humanities including history, art, and writing can lead students to some incredible insights on how they view our present.

Some parents insist their children learn skills like properly setting the table, writing thank you notes and how to handle introductions. These kids often joke that they know more about outdated manners and customs than any of their friends. Still, they can go anywhere and fit in because they know proper social behavior and norms. Despite their protests, they feel good when someone compliments them on their skills.

Cultural context includes social skills like manners. It extends to art, literature, customs, values, history. Learning is forever... start today!



Do Learning Styles Change?

Recently a parent asked if a child's learning style changes as the child ages. The answer is "yes". To understand where learning style comes from, we need to know that more than three-fifths of a person's learning style is biologically imposed.

Even among family members, learning styles vary. Mothers and fathers tend to have diametrically opposite learning styles, children often reflect the partial style of one parent but not the other, siblings learn differently from each other, and offspring do not necessarily reflect either parent's style.

While many people think of learning styles as perceptual modes (auditory, visual, tactile, and kinesthetic), learning styles also encompass noise preference, lighting preference, seating arrangements, uninterrupted study or break, snacks or no snacks, passivity or mobility.

Although all gifted students do not have the same learning style, they all have learning styles that differ significantly from other students. Gifted students prefer kinesthetic (experiential and active) and hands-on instruction, but many are able to learn auditorially and visually because of multiperceptual strengths.

Most gifted children prefer to learn either by themselves or with an authoritative teacher. Few GT students want to learn with classmates.

So back to the question of learning styles and how they change... things change as children get older and these changes affect learning styles. Some of the developmental changes that affect learning styles include:

- motivation
- need for less or more structure
- conformity versus nonconformity
- sociological preferences

Regardless of your child's learning style today, know that things will change. The good news is that multiperceptual strengths will always be there to help!

Characteristics of the Musically Gifted Child



No one knows what exactly makes a person musically gifted. Is it genetics or exposure to music from infancy? Most likely, it's a combination of the two. But here are some early indicators of musical giftedness.

Musically-responsive movement-

Young children don't have the vocal or instrumental skills to respond to music, so they follow along with their bodies.

Response to good (and bad) sounds-

Children with high aural awareness will respond negatively to out-of-tune playing.

Listening for music in the world-

Here are some examples of what this may look like: tapping pencils or objects rhythmically, hearing and singing back the sound of birds or a bell, echoing sounds.

Hearing songs or melodic ideas all around-

A musically gifted child will be able to find songs they recognize from only a few pitches.

Instrument playing by ear-

Students with high musical ability will be able to play an instrument and easily figure out songs they've heard before.

Matching pitch-

A gifted child in music will be able to match your pitch whether you sing it or play it on an instrument.

Picking out harmony lines- They can pick out and sing along with harmonies of pieces at a younger age.

Heightened emotional response- A musically gifted student will respond to the feeling of music with depth and complexity as it moves through the composition.

Enjoys Music- Perhaps the most important sign of all, does your child enjoy music?

How you talk to your child might make them smarter... it's in the explanations

A 2018 neuroscience study calculated that back-and-forth conversation is more important to brain development than the sheer number of words. This was an important finding in how language affects child development.

Now, a series of studies delves into how some parents are answering their children's questions and how those answers might make a difference in how we learn. The studies are small and haven't been replicated but the work is an interesting glimpse into this new direction of early childhood research.

A recent study of more than 100 four and five-year olds (Corriveau and Kurkul) found that children who were given answers that include detail and explanation, learned more than children who received shorter, less detailed explanations.

For example, if a child asks the question, "Why is there a battery?," a simple answer could be, "To make it work." That's not wrong, but it's not very informative. A more detailed response supplied by one parent in the study was: "The battery is there to give the toy power. When the batteries are connected to these buttons, then the toy will work because it has power."

In a previous study, researchers noticed that children prefer non-circular answers to questions. For example, a circular response to the question, "Why is the sky blue?" would be, "Because it's not another color." When asked to choose between two adults, one who utters circular answers and one who doesn't, kids tend to choose the person who offers the better non-circular reasoning. It didn't matter if the answer was scientifically wrong; children seem to appreciate the attempt at a deeper explanation.

Kurkul and Corriveau have compared the answers that low-income and middle-income caregivers typically offer children and they found stark differences. Low-income parents and caregivers were more likely to give circular answers to children's questions than middle-class parents and caregivers. And now the researchers believe that the better answers are not just preferred but also lead to better learning.

We'd love to hear from you! Share your challenges, questions, and success stories at [Praeditus Feedback](#)

Strengths That May Become Problems

Many gifted children have large and advanced vocabularies and their peers may not relate.

In this case, the issue most likely isn't vocabulary but social skills. People who are good at social skills can "read" others and modify behavior or conversation to match the person they are communicating with. If your child does not read cues from others, he or she may be talking over the persons head or over-communicating. Focus on social skills and practice conversations. Children are capable of carrying on many types of conversations including academic and social if they practice.