

PRAEDITUS

Latin praeditus adj. 1 cl. meaning gifted

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Gifted Humor

The best part of an AIM teacher's job is hanging out with your kids. And one of the reasons we love being with them is the way they think and talk ... especially with regards to humor.

Conversations are often absolutely hysterical. GT kids use puns, jokes, comic asides, irony and satire as a standard part of their talk. Having an uncommon wit and an advanced grasp of language is a common characteristic of a gifted learner. We grow used to their lively banter and only upon reflection, do we see how much fun and sunshine it brings to the day.

On the downside, gifted comedians may easily disrupt a classroom with their humor and may end up as "class clowns" if humor is not channeled into appropriate activities. Creation of joke books, cartoons, stand up routines, and humorous newspapers are great activities for these kids.

While we seldom focus on the skill of "joke-creation" when we discuss GT education, it's worth remembering how our verbally-gifted little comedians can make life so joyful!



Potential... A Misleading Concept

It's not uncommon to hear someone say, "He's just not living up to his potential," or maybe, "We want to see your child reach her full potential." What is potential? Is it possible to reach your potential?

Potential is like an eternal journey... it has no boundaries and never ends. So, the idea of meeting your full potential is impossible. If children are equipped to grow, learn and experience, potential will always be slightly out of reach. Having and encouraging your child to have a growth mindset is a cornerstone to expanding potential.

A growth mindset is the belief that you can grow your intelligence with hard work and perseverance. Conversely, a fixed mindset focuses on the concept that intelligence is fixed. All of your children have taken a cognitive abilities test as a part of qualification for gifted services. What do cognitive abilities tests measure? Not innate, genetic intelligence. The tests measure *developed ability*. And, when a child is not exposed to the type of reasoning activities measured on the test, they will most likely score lower than peers who have been exposed to this type of thinking. Studies of children re-taking a cognitive abilities test at an appropriate interval prove that *developed ability* grows with the hard work and perseverance that are cornerstones of a growth mindset.

So, does your child have that critical growth mindset?

Here are three questions offered by authors, Mary Cay Ricci and Margaret Lee, to determine your child's mindset.

- Do you think that everyone can learn new things? Why?
- Do you think that some kids are born smarter than others? Why?
- Do you think we can actually change how smart we are? Why?

More on mindset development in upcoming issues.

The Calculus Trap

Your child loves math... math class is a breeze and your child needs more challenge. Should you encourage your child's teacher to move your child through the curriculum faster?

When an avid student with great skill in mathematics, rushes through the standard curriculum to get to higher levels of math, it is known as the calculus trap (because of how early you can get to calculus if you try). **It is not the best answer for high achieving math students.**

Kids need a strong foundation upon which knowledge of advanced mathematical and scientific concepts can be built. They are better off learning how to take tools and apply them to more complex problems... even in elementary school.

Many students get stuck in the calculus trap because they believe it's their only option or because parents have pushed them; mistakenly believing that ease of computation or good number sense is the same as in-depth knowledge. There are many elementary students, whizzes at computation, who can't apply those skills to solve a story problem.

The interested student should be challenged with more complex applications of math tools and exposed to math through online activities, or extracurricular programs, such as math teams. There are also many summer programs and good books for study, and some local programs offer opportunities for eager students.

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



Discovering and Igniting Passion

What can we do to help our children find their passion and purpose in life? Curiosity is natural. Babies are born curious. Parents can provide freedom to explore as children grow and share in the excitement of exploration.

At school, teachers will apply learning in their classrooms with real life situations and possible careers. Some teachers allow students to pursue their passions after they complete their regular work. Students in the AIM and GATE Academy programs are often given time to work individually on a study of their choice.

As parents, you have many more opportunities to ignite the passion of your gifted learner. Here are a few ideas:

- Reflective listening: "You spend a lot of your money/time on this? I can see it's very important to you. Do you think this might be something you'd like to do in college/when you grow up?"
- Make the time to visit museums, historic sites, re-enactments, and exhibits. Behind-the-scenes tours can often be arranged.
- Explore the mysteries, puzzles, and challenges in your child's area(s) of interest.
- Find summer camps, or other out-of-school learning experiences designed for gifted children that have the focus, depth, and intensity that your child needs.
- Encourage children to journal about the topics that intrigue them.
- Use the internet for immediate access to ground-breaking ideas and exposure to the intriguing "what if" questions.

Many people will play a role in helping your child discover their life's path. When asked about career choices, people often name a particular person who motivated them to work in this field. However, parents play the most important role because they have the luxury of a long-term relationship.

Affirming your child's passion creates opportunities for discussion and evaluation of study and career choices. You are part of a mutual search for the passion that will give your child's life meaning. Enjoy the journey.