

Learning

A superior memory is one of the most common--and most obvious--characteristics of a gifted child. "It jumps out to a lot of parents, who'll notice that their kids remember everything," says clinical psychologist Dr. Edward R. Amend, co-author of *The Parents Guide to Gifted Children*. "One of the kids I worked with knew the states and their capitals before he was five. Information just tends to stick there." Such children may use advanced vocabulary for

their grade or age level. For example, such 3-year-olds may use words like "understandably" and "actually" in their everyday speech.

Creativity

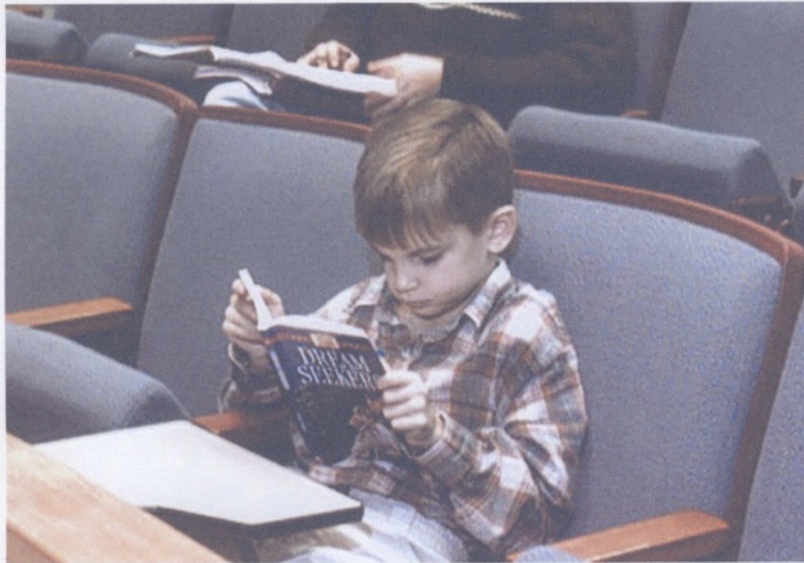
Intellectual playfulness, or a willingness to fantasize, is another characteristic of gifted children. These traits aren't always positive, warns the University of Connecticut's Dr. Robin Schader. "The creative child is the one who is pretty risky in the classroom situation. They are going to



see things in unconventional ways. They are going to make leaps. They are going to have a terrible time with true/false tests. They are going to say 'What if...?'" Schader says. "You need to stop and ask them what they were seeing and how they came to those conclusions."

Reading

Gifted children can focus on reading for an extended period of time, and they often pursue reading material above their age or grade level. Judy Galbraith, author of *You Know Your Child Is Gifted When ...*, recalls when a second-grade student brought *The Hobbit* to class. "At first, I was a little skeptical that he was comprehending it," she says. "But then he started to talk about what was happening, and the characters." Gifted students can tear through several books a week.



Motivation

Gifted children can concentrate intensely on one subject. When Judy Galbraith, author of *You Know Your Child Is Gifted When ...*, was teaching, she met a first-grader with such an in-depth knowledge of dinosaurs that he could spell their names and rattle off who ate whom in the food

chain. "Lots of kids go through a phase when they are fascinated by dinosaurs, but in this case, the first-grader really knew dinosaurs to [an extreme] degree," she says. "He would be just one example of the kind of child who really can concentrate and is interested in a specific topic far beyond their same-age peers."

"Their perceptual organization is very advanced. They may be fascinated by that, and not as fascinated by learning to read."

-Dr Barbara Klein

Author of, *Raising Gifted Kids: Everything You Need to Know to Help Your Exceptional Child Thrive*