

# Gifted and Talented

Why should we care?

An introduction to gifted and  
talented students in our classroom

By Evelien Hofkens

# Agenda

1. What is gifted and talented?
  - Definitions
  - Multiple Intelligences
  - Importance
  
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3. How can we cater for them in the classroom?
  - Enrichment and Acceleration
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# What is Gifted and Talented?



# Definitions...

## Multiple definitions available

-Conservative definitions

(IQ based, ~1% of population)

-Liberal definitions

(broad range of criteria, ~ 10% of population)

-Contemporary definitions (broad criteria, % not stated)

# MoE Definitions

- Exceptional abilities compared to most peers
- Potential to achieve outstanding performance
- Require different learning opportunities
- Need emotional and social support to realise gifts
- Not simply those with high intelligence

(Ministry of Education, 2003)

‘The gifted and talented represent a wide range of students with many different abilities. For example, some students may have exceptional abilities in science or technology, some in art or poetry, and others in social leadership.

It is now accepted that the gifted and talented are not simply those with high intelligence.’

(MoE, 2000)

# Further Definitions

- Significantly different from their peers
- May be gifted in one area but not in others
- Twice exceptional
- Gifts are not the same as personal strengths
- Bright does not necessarily gifted

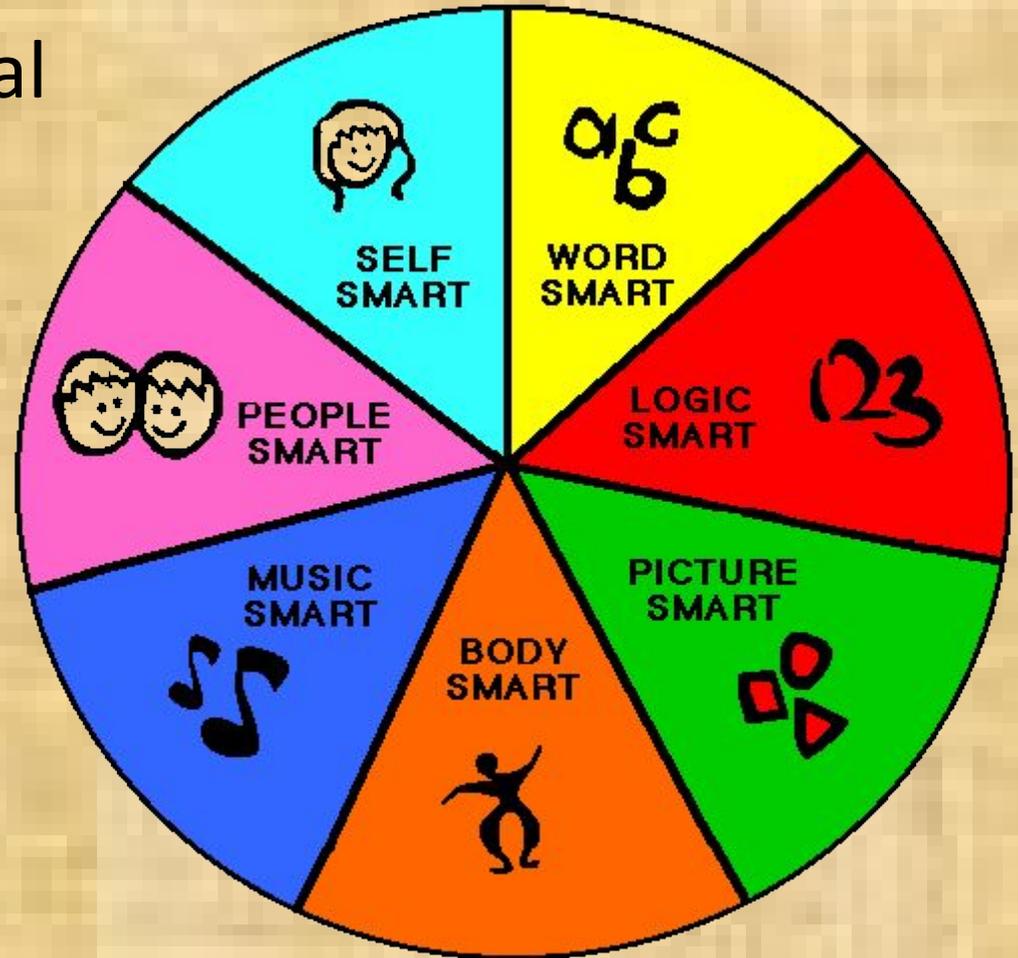


“children, and, where applicable, youth(s), who are identified in pre-school, elementary, or secondary level as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, specific academic or leadership ability, or in the performing and visual arts...”

(ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children 1978)

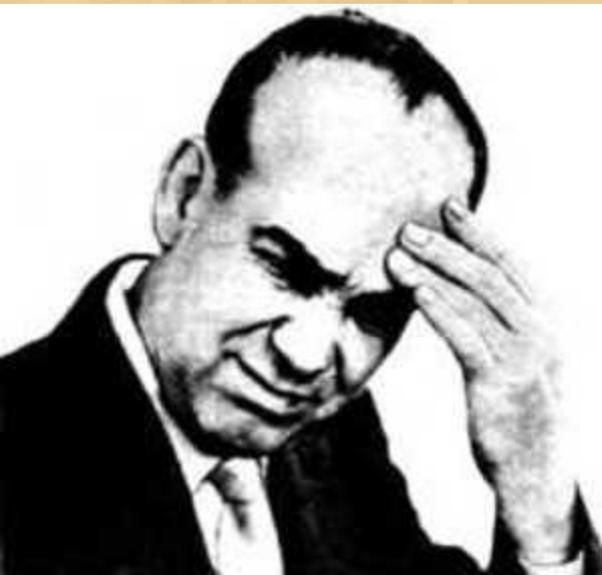
# Gardner's Multiple Intelligences

- logical-mathematical
- linguistic
- bodily/kinesthetic
- spatial
- musical
- interpersonal
- intrapersonal
- naturalistic





**So why is this important?**



- Gifted and talented students need special provisions in the classroom, just like those on the lower end of the spectrum
- We can make G & T students well adjusted, lifelong learners
- Failure to recognise and meet the needs of the gifted and talented can result in their boredom, frustration, mediocrity, and even hostility
- It is our professional obligation to help everyone
- Since 2005 schools must identify how they meet G & T needs

# Identifying Gifted and Talented Students



# Principles of Identification

- Begin early
- Open communication
- An ongoing process
- Means to an end
- Unobtrusive
- Team approach
- Be aware of hidden gifted or under-represented groups
- Multi-method approach

# Gagne's Model of Gifted and Talented

Idea that gifts and talents differ

Gifted - ability-based

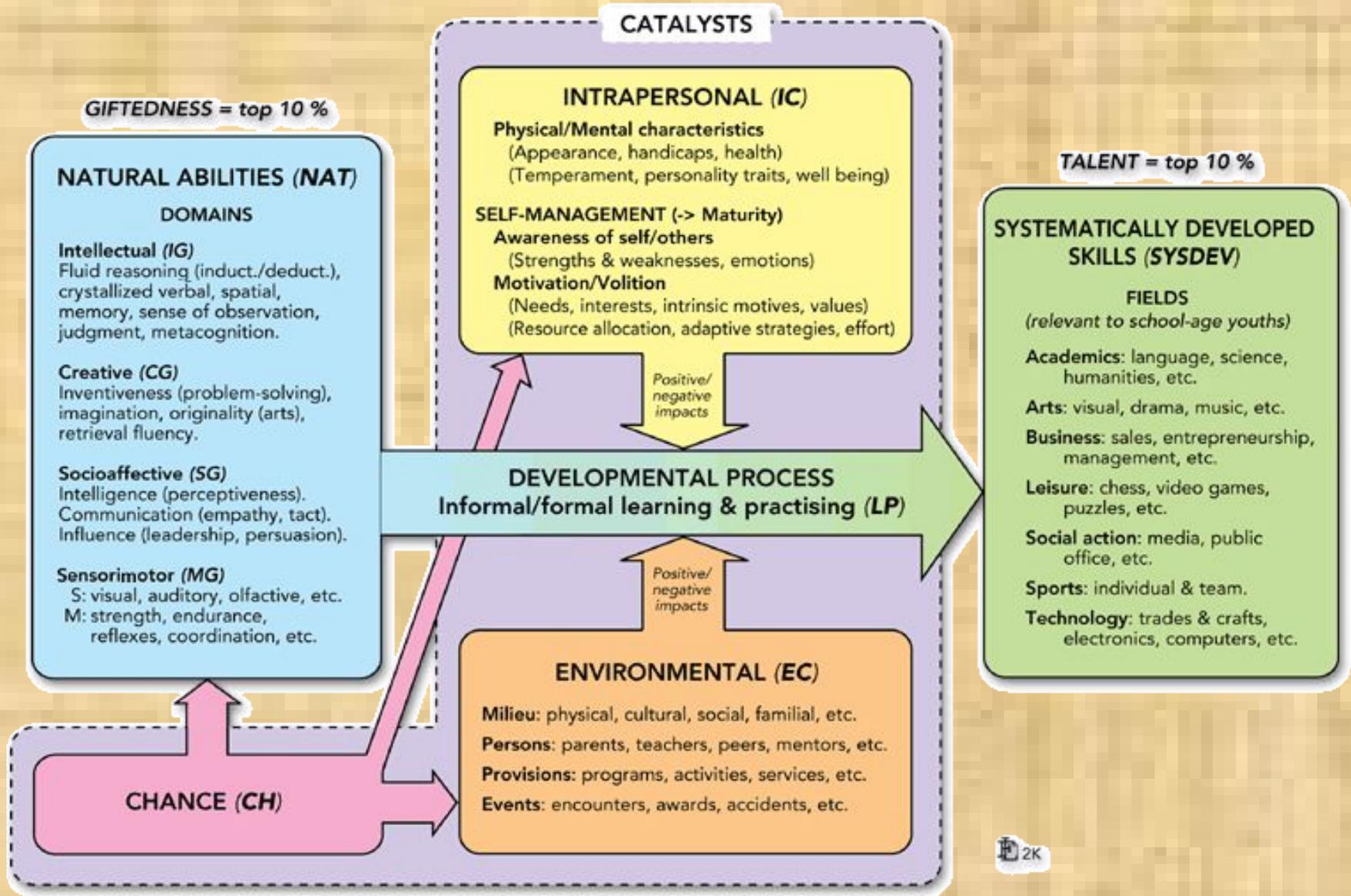
Talent - performance-based

However, gifts are not always visible due to two factors:

**intrapersonal** (motivation, perseverance, confidence, organisation and concentration)

**environmental** (milieu, significant people, provisions made by schools or events in their lives)

# Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent



“Some students will not display observable talent in an obvious way. We need to observe students who exhibit signs of disruptive behaviour – they may just be bored or unchallenged.”

(Deborah Fox, 1986)

# Hidden Gifted

- Special attention should be given to the 'hidden gifted'. These include:
  - disadvantaged gifted
  - disabled gifted
  - those with learning difficulties
  - underachieving gifted
  - those from minority cultural and ethnic groups

# **We need to watch out for...**

- Obvious gifts and talents
- Potential gifts
- Hidden gifts
- Multicultural values
- Behavioural characteristics

**We can do this by....**

# Identification Methods

**Talk** to former teachers, staff, parents, coaches, peers and of course the students themselves

- Objective and subjective testing
- Portfolios
- Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Nominations

“Use multiple assessment measure  
–Predictive accuracy is increased through multiple measures. There are different areas of giftedness so things like authentic assessment, portfolios, auditions, tryouts and interviews can be crucial to evaluate a student’s gift.”

(Pfeiffer, 2002)

And remember...

**This is an ongoing  
process!!!**

# Sub-Types of Giftedness

[Betts and Neihart \(1988\)](#) have categorised gifted and talented students into six groups. This is really useful for identifying G & T students in secondary schools where their ability may not be evident in their work.

# Successful Gifted

These students achieve highly at school and are the group most likely to be identified as gifted and talented. They are conforming, eager for the approval of others, and perfectionistic. They lack autonomy and assertiveness, and avoid taking risks

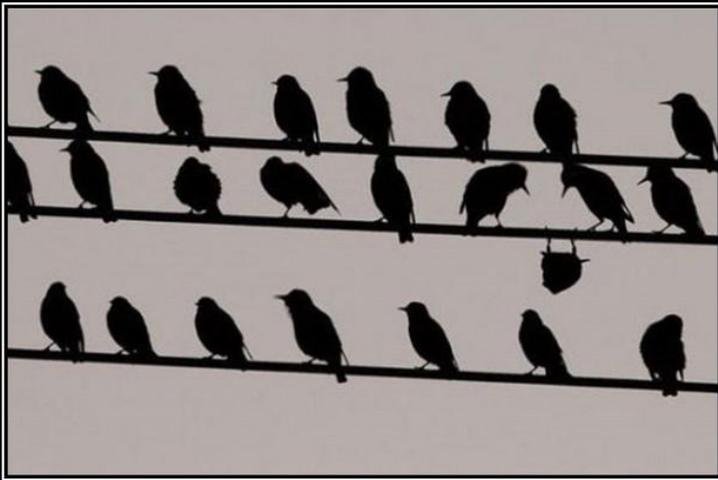
[Betts and Neihart \(1988\)](#)



# Challenging gifted

These students are highly creative but frustrated, bored, questioning, and sometimes rebellious. They do not conform to the school system and often challenge school rules and conventions

[Betts and Neihart \(1988\)](#)



**NON-CONFORMISTS**

They're not on Facebook, and they don't care what you think

# Underground gifted

These students deny their abilities in order to fit in. They may be insecure, shy, and quiet, avoid taking risks, and resist challenges. Many are never identified as gifted.

[Betts and Neihart \(1988\)](#)



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"Mr. Wickers called me 'gifted' in front of the whole class. I'm ruined."

# Dropout gifted

These students are resentful and angry because they feel that the system has failed to meet their needs. They are often perceived as 'rebellious loners', and may be disruptive or withdrawn. They fail to complete schoolwork, and their levels of achievement fall well below their ability

[Betts and Neihart \(1988\)](#)

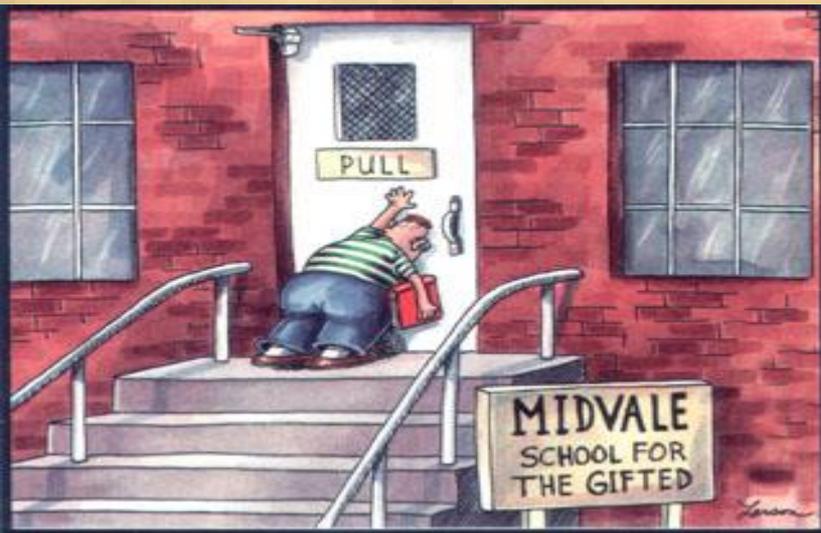


MARLON BRANDO

# Double-labeled gifted

These students are gifted but also have a physical or sensory disability or a learning difficulty. Often their giftedness goes unrecognised because people fail to see past their disability. They can become angry and frustrated, and may feel powerless.

[Betts and Neihart \(1988\)](#)



# Autonomous gifted

These students are confident, independent, and self-directed. They are intrinsically motivated and willing to take risks. They set goals for themselves and take responsibility for their



[Betts and Neihart \(1988\)](#)

"You know, Dad, you do a darn good job. You should let me record you sometime, and I'll podcast you on my website. Just a thought."

# And a 7<sup>th</sup> ...

## Culturally diverse gifted

These are students who are not identified as having exceptional ability. Some may go unrecognised because their performance generally is affected by low self-esteem and low teacher expectations. Their gifts and talents may not be recognised or valued within their school, or the values and behaviours of their culture may discourage them from displaying their abilities.

(Bevan-Brown (1999) in (MoE, 2000))



By identifying these behavioural characteristics we can try to differentiate our classes to engage and challenge these students

**So how can we cater for them  
in the classroom?**



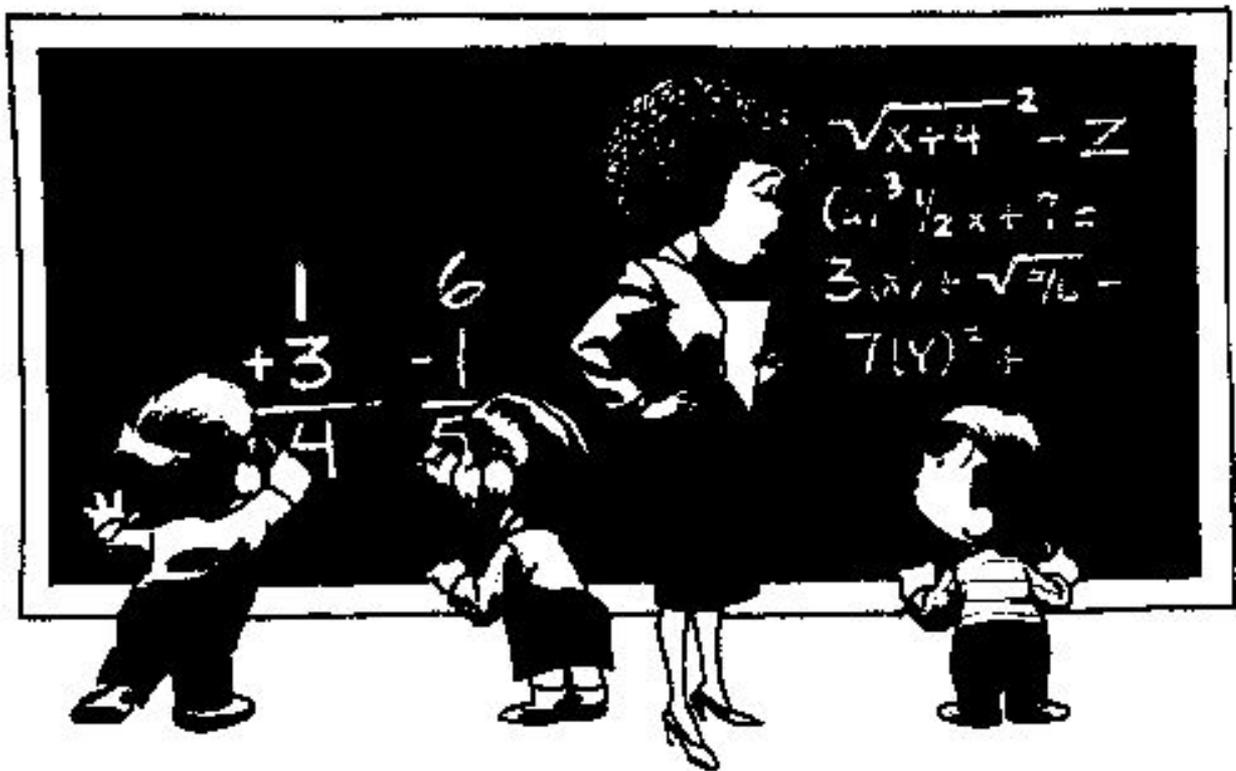
# Enrichment and Acceleration

**Enrichment** refers to "learning activities providing depth and breadth to regular teaching according to the child's abilities and needs" (page 362). Enrichment activities are normally in addition to and different from the regular classroom activities by way of offering challenge.

(Townsend, 1996)

**Acceleration** is instruction that aligns gifted and talented students' abilities and learning needs more closely to the curriculum. "In practice, acceleration occurs when children are exposed to new content at an earlier age than other children or when they cover the same content in less time" (page 361). Thus, acceleration differentiates the timing of introduction of content and/or the rate of coverage.

(Townsend, 1996)



**"How many times do I have to tell you...  
you're not supposed to read ahead."**

# For example...

- **Enrichment:** getting gifted students to direct a class performance with other students acting, but all study the same text.
- **Acceleration:** Getting gifted students to study a text that is aimed at a higher level

# Differentiation

- Can be used for both enrichment and acceleration
- Makes it possible to cater for G&T in mainstream classes
- Benefits ALL students

# Differentiation

You can differentiate:

- Activities (different tasks for students)
- Outcomes (working for different goals)
- Direction (give some more, some less)
- Groups (skills or achievement based)
- Resources (different interests/difficulty)

# What Really Works in Gifted and Talented Education

Deborah Eyre (2007)

'Golden Rules' for teaching gifted and talented students:

- Creating a classroom climate that supports risk taking and high flying
- Approaching lessons as an apprenticeship rather than studying to pass the exam
- Make use of the strengths and recognize weaknesses in individuals
- Encourage higher order thinking and questioning
- Explaining and challenging from both teacher and students

# Summary

# Gifted Students are...

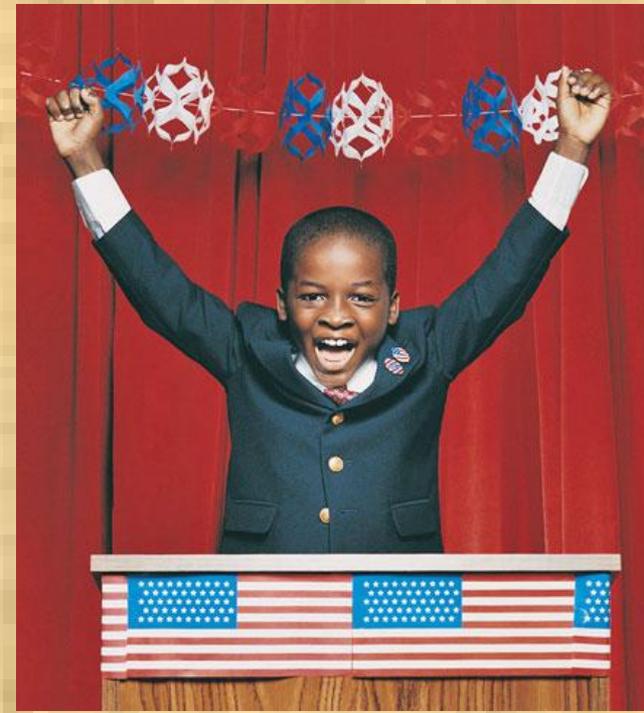
- Exceptional
- Different
- Potentially outstanding

They have needs that need to be met, just like everyone else

They have multiple intelligences

# It is important we cater to their needs because...

- They have the right to be challenged, engaged and encouraged!
- It is our professional obligation to!
- They are our future leaders!



# **We can identify their potential by...**

Communicating with their other teachers, coaches, parents, community, peers and the students themselves!

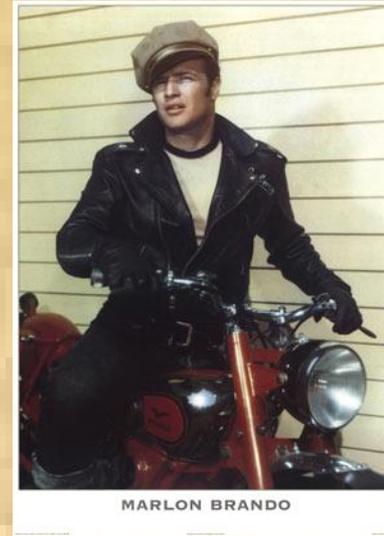
We can do this through:

- Discussions
- Objective and subjective testing
- Portfolios
- Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Nominations

# Remember:

All students are different, and many will have hidden gifts and talents.

Watch out for those six sub-types of giftedness!



**We can...**

Differentiate our classroom using both  
enrichment and acceleration

Remember the Golden Rules!

So lets get a shared  
understanding in  
this school!

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