



Early Childhood Council Annual Conference 2010  
Presentation Paper

**PRACTICAL IDEAS FOR EXTENDING AND ENRICHING  
BRIGHT PRESCHOOLERS IN YOUR CENTRE**

(Hands-on activities to help with teaching gifted preschoolers effectively  
within your own preschool environment)

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**Abstract**

*What do gifted preschoolers look like?*

There will be a segment on terminology, identification and characteristics of gifted preschoolers.

*Working with parents and caregivers of gifted children.*

How to answer those frequently asked questions. "Where to from here?"

How can preschool teachers cater for gifted preschoolers?

Presenting a holistic approach to developing skills for life with gifted preschool children and helping them move towards becoming independent learners plus activities and approaches that can be used to assist children to predict, estimate and take risks. This includes ways to assist children to predict, estimate and take risks, with references to the skills and approaches used when fostering reading and writing links, an understanding of maths concepts and the joy of science.

**Introduction**

What do gifted preschoolers look like?

Where do we start?

Do we need to identify them first?

or

Do we put a programme into place that allows us to "see" them?

**Discussion**

**Identifying the Gifted Child (Preschooler)**

Thomas Edison's teachers told him he was too stupid to learn anything.

Sir Isaac Newton did poorly in grade school.

Albert Einstein did not speak until he was four years old and could not read until he was seven years old.

Robert Frost was expelled from school for chronic daydreaming.

The young F.W. Woolworth, while working at a dry goods store, was not allowed to wait on customers because he "didn't have enough sense."

Abraham Lincoln entered the Black Hawk War as a captain and finished as a private.

A newspaper editor fired Walt Disney. Disney had, as the editor said, "no good ideas."

**Hopefully we can do better.**

**Characteristics of young gifted children**

**Extending and enriching the whole child**

**What is best for an individual child?**

**What topics and activities work well?**

The session includes demonstrations of hands-on science experiments that can be used within the normal preschool session and explanations of the science involved.

## **Conclusion**

### **Your role (teacher and preschool) in extending and enriching our gifted preschoolers is:**

- To provide the enthusiasm, activities, equipment and ideas.
- To give the children a positive, caring environment – and friends – to discuss ideas with.
- To be a sounding board for concerned parents.
- To allow parents to see that their child has “peers” – children who also think, act, talk, reason, read ... at a similar level and / or in a similar way to their own child.

If there are no peers for them within your Centre then you need to be able to point the parents in the direction of someone they can talk to. This could be the parent of an older gifted child, a Small Poppies or One Day School contact, (or the contact details for the Gifted Education Centre), an NZAGC contact person or another professional who can give them some answers to their questions and suggest possible “next moves”.

- To give parents of these children the opportunity to realise they are not alone and that other parents are facing the same hurdles they are – children who don’t sleep, who out-reason them, friends / family who don’t understand ...

## **Reference**

Rosemary Cathcart (2005.) Understanding and Working with Gifted and Talented Learners. Hodder Education.