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Q's and A's about Screening and Evaluating Kindergarten Students for Gifted Programs

What are the steps in the evaluation for gifted identification?

- The parent should ask for the teacher's viewpoint about the need for early identification. This discussion will provide insight into the child's academic needs compared to other same-aged students.
- When a kindergarten student has passed the middle first grade level in fiction and nonfiction on the district Benchmark Reading Test he/she may be referred for screening.
- The counselor will screen the student with a test of critical thinking provided by the GATE Office. The test manual includes a script for administration of practice items and the test questions.
- A letter will inform the parent about the screening outcome.
- If the child passes the screening the parent will be asked to sign a referral for gifted identification (pink form). The counselor will send the signed referral to the GATE Office. *The parent of a kindergarten student may prefer to wait one year and submit the referral in first grade.*
- An examiner from the GATE Office administers another test of reasoning at the school site.
- The GATE office will send a letter to the home explaining the results of the GATE evaluation.
- A copy of the findings will be sent to the school and placed in the cumulative record.

When does a child get tested and when will the parent receive the results?

Kindergarten students are usually screened in February or March. The screening results are usually sent to the parents within two weeks. Then, the GATE Office will complete the final evaluation by the end of the school year.

What can be done at home to prepare for GATE testing?

A rich, inquisitive environment is the best preparation for GATE testing. Young children learn best through the sensori-motor systems and frequent opportunities to talk about their experiences. Giftedness can be nurtured but it is inherent to the child and therefore, it cannot be forced upon the child.

What is the GATE curriculum?

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The curriculum for Gate students follows the same California State Content Standards as all students. However, most students in the GATE class are reading above grade level, which allows for acceleration, depth and complexity of the standards.

How many times can a child be tested for the GATE program?

A child may be screened yearly.

A GATE test may be completed twice when there is sufficient evidence of above average ability. A retest will not occur before 3rd grade.

What does the GATE test involve? What kind of test is it?

The GATE test is not an academic test. It is a test of reasoning. The student has an individual test booklet to mark the correct answer. The child is not required to read. Directions are orally read to the students. The answers are presented in picture form.

The test measures a child's knowledge of the physical and social world. Questions require a child to make comparisons, grasp relationships and understand general laws of nature.

What are some characteristics of young, gifted children?

Gifted characteristics are observable in areas of intellectuality, creativity, task commitment, the arts and leadership. Some characteristics exhibited in the early years are:

- Richness of oral expression, imagery and elaboration
- Acquires a second language rapidly
- Possesses an unusual wealth of general information on a variety of topics
- Quick and accurate recall of factual information
- Establishes relationships between seemingly unrelated concepts and ideas
- Gives unusual, unique or clever responses
- Generates many ideas, suggestions, solutions
- Displays a great deal of curiosity and asks many questions
- Shows independence in developing solutions or a product
- Pursues own interests in leisure time
- Displays common sense and uses knowledge practically
- Makes decisions based on assessment of problem
- Effectively organizes people and structures activities