

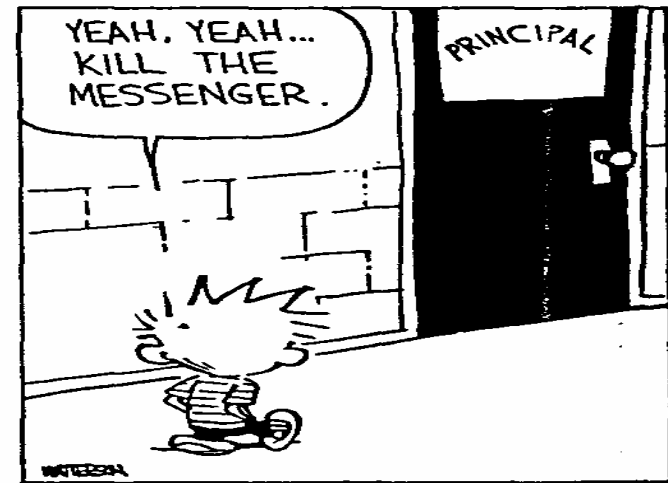
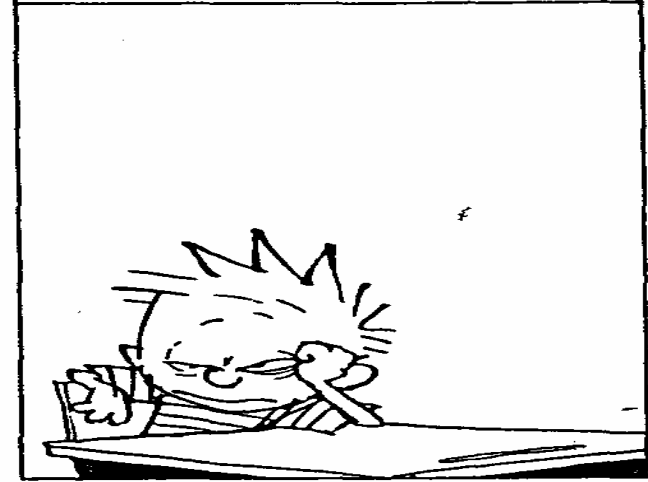
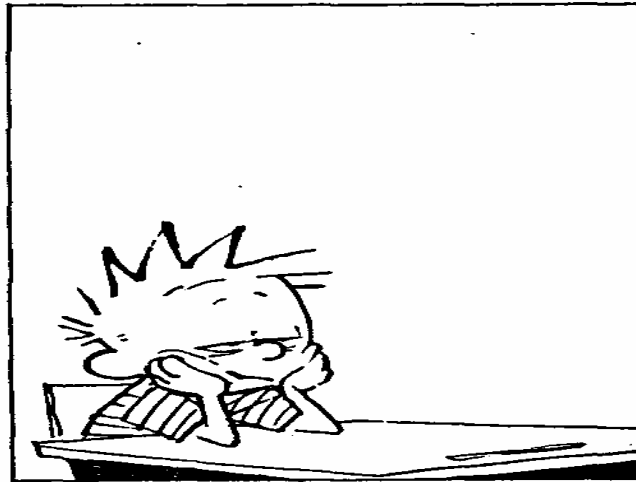
Gifted boys' understanding of their school experience

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Bill Watterson (1992) The Indispensable Calvin and Hobbes.
Great Britain: Universal Press Syndicate



Reasons for interest.

- ❖ Long time personal and professional interest in gifted children.
- ❖ Experience with teaching gifted boys.
- ❖ Anecdotal reporting by teachers and parents of similar issues for gifted boys.
- ❖ Global interest in the education of boys.
- ❖ Lack of research material from the boy's perceptions.

Research framework

2003

Pilot Study

12 Year 3 and Year 6 boys in focus group interviews asked very open questions about their experience of school

2004

34 Year 6 and Year 8 boys complete a questionnaire and in individual interviews were asked to elaborate on selected questionnaire items.

2007

Year 8 boys from 2004 will complete the questionnaire and be interviewed about secondary school. Comparisons between their questionnaires will be made and trends emerging from their interviews analysed to determine if there are any significant differences in experience.

Starter questions for pilot study focus group interviews

1. Some people say that children can be gifted. What do you think that means?
2. I've been told that you are all gifted. Why do you think people would say that about you?
3. What sort of things do you like to do at school?
4. Think about a teacher you learned best with. What was special about that teacher?
5. What are some of the things you like to do at school with other children?
6. What would you have at school if you could have anything you wanted?

Understandings of Giftedness

- ❖ Strong belief in a success criteria - performance was seen as a determinant of giftedness.
- ❖ Giftedness was in comparison with others.
- ❖ Academic focus was strong though boys quickly accepted other areas of giftedness, especially sport.

It kinda means we are a little bit smarter than some people, we have higher IQs than them

It might mean we that we have a better ability to learn and things

Well, we've all got more strengths than weaknesses.

I just think it means we're different, smart or something.

Trends from Pilot Study Interviews

Content

Links to prior interests and knowledge.

Challenges weaker subjects.

Feeds into self taught areas.

Teacher Qualities

Flexible but well organised.

Understanding of passions, abilities, preferences

Allows choice and input in all learning.

Good sense of humour but “strict.”

Choice

Want input into decisions on

People

Content

Processes

But accept that the teacher has to set the learning tasks but they want to negotiate within those for their own interests and processes.

Grouping

Critical mass issues – the group has to be the right size for the task.

Composition issues – the rest of the group need to have the same ability or interests.

Gender issues – boys don't work well with girls.

Roles in the group can help if people stick to them!

Wish list

More personal space

More technology

More access to teacher input.

More timetable choice.

More sport and fitness.

Level of challenge

Prefer challenging work, problem solving, competitions, withdrawal group work and using technology.

Easy work in frustrating, tend to set higher standards if work too easy/repetitive

Methodology

- ❖ This is a three phase project.
- ❖ 2004 – Four year 6 boys from a Christchurch state school with a well developed programme for gifted and talented learners took part in a 90 minute focus group interview to determine their experiences of school.
- ❖ 2005 - 25 Rural, urban, state and independent Primary and Intermediate schools from decile 1 to 10 were invited to participate. 15 schools consented to involvement and used an identification checklist designed by the researchers to identify gifted boys at Year 6 or Year 8 level who were achieving well or underachieving,
- ❖ Schools sent letters and consent forms to selected boys families and 17 boys at Year 6 and 17 boys at Year 8 formed the subject group.
- ❖ A questionnaire designed by the researchers, based on material from the 2004 pilot study, was administered during a one to one session with each boy. Completion of the questionnaire was followed by a 30 to 40 minute interview to allow the boys to elaborate their questionnaire responses.
- ❖ Interviews were transcribed and questionnaires analysed to determine trends in responses.
- ❖ 2007 – the 17 Year 8 boys will repeat the questionnaire and be interviewed to determine if there are any significant differences in their experience now that they are at Secondary school.

Understandings of giftedness

Success, performance, comparison and academic

A Yr 6

I think that it means that people have better abilities compared to other people. Means that generally they're more interested to get on with the stuff they like to higher levels rather than hang back and just wait for a life.

C Yr 6

Yeah. I've been told that I am but I have no idea what the word means. I know what gifted in other contexts means....(that) you have heaps of luck.

T Yr 6

I am not too sure. You hear it quite a lot in school and things just when the teacher talks about it and stuff. But it is sort of confusing because there's not much - they don't speak of it much.

T Yr 6

But I think when people use it I think they refer to people that are academically gifted. Which I think that is, in a way, unfair because everyone's *gifted* in their own way.

S Yr 6

Which is more intelligent than the other people. Like when people say: Oh you're in the brainy class eh? I say: No I'm not. I'm just in the class with the people of a slightly higher intellectual capacitance.

J Yr 6

It means that in a certain area they can be outstanding. They can just be a light that just turns on and people can see them as the best in the class in that particular area. Or they can be gifted in more than one area. They're just the ones that stride out in front.

K Yr 6

Means they can do things a little bit better than other people can. Sometimes gifted people can be way above and sometimes they can be just a little bit above.

F Yr 8

Since birth they have a special talent or something. Like the children who play instruments very well or - like child prodigies.

A Yr 8

I think it means that people have better abilities compared to other people. Means that generally they are more interested to get on with the stuff rather than hang back and just wait for a life.

S Yr 8

Which is more intelligent than the other people. Like when people say "oh you're in the brainy class eh?" and I say "No I'm not. I'm in the class with the people of slightly higher intellectual capacitance!"

M Yr 8

They're out of the ordinary, like they're special, they can do things better than other people.....they could just have the ability to do that well and they don't have to learn how to do it much

A Yr 8

Smarter in schoolwork I reckon.....but you could be non-gifted in all the subjects but you could be really gifted in sports and stuff.

Statement Agreement

Number of returns 34

	Year 6			Year 8		
	A	N	D	A	N	D
1. School is the best place to learn.	12	3	2	9	5	1
2. Teachers think that I am one of the best students.	9	7	1	9	5	1
3. The harder the work the more interesting it is	9	7	1	7	7	2
4. I like tests.	7	7	4	6	4	6
5. I like group work.	7	3	7	10	2	4
6. Teachers should tell us what to learn.	4	4	9	4	3	9
7. I find school work very boring.	4	5	8	1	9	6
8. I learn well in any group.	4	5	8	6	3	7
9. I prefer to make my own choices when learning.	12	4	1	12	3	1
10. I like to do extension work.	13	3	1	13	2	1
11. I have subjects I love to learn about.	16	1	0	15	1	0
12. I prefer to write about things than talk about things	3	3	11	2	6	8
13. I like teaching things to other people.	7	8	2	5	5	6
14. I spend a long time working on subjects I like.	11	5	1	12	2	2
15. I always try to do my best work.	15	1	1	11	5	0

Key Trends Questions

A teacher I learn well with

- ☐ let's me study at my own pace.
- ☐ lets me choose how I will work.
- ☐ has a good sense of humour.
- ☐ is well organised and makes everyone work.
- ☐ understands my interests.
- ☐ lets me choose who I will work with.
- ☐ gives me challenging work.
- ☐ tells me how I must do my work

I learn best in group work when

- ☐ I am with my friends.
- ☐ the teacher picks the group.
- ☐ I am with people of the same ability.
- ☐ when there is a mix of boys and girls
- ☐ I am with people with the same interests.
- ☐ I am with 3 or less people.
- ☐ I am with 4 or more people.
- ☐ when we have our own jobs to do.

I will do my best work on subjects that

- ☐ are an interest of mine.
- ☐ the teacher likes.
- ☐ are new to me.
- ☐ can be used in real life.
- ☐ I already know lots about.
- ☐ let me solve problems
- ☐ need technology or equipment.
- ☐ are harder than usual.

The way I like to work most is when

- ☐ I know I will get good marks.
- ☐ it is part of a competition.
- ☐ it is about my interests.
- ☐ I can teach others.
- ☐ I can work at my own speed.
- ☐ I can present in different ways.
- ☐ there are rewards for working well.
- ☐ I can work on my own.

Effective teachers of the gifted

From Rogers, Karen. (2002) *Reforming gifted education*.

Arizona: Great Potential Press Inc.

- ❖ **High degree of intelligence or intellectual honesty.**
- ❖ **Expertise in a specific intellectual or talent area.**
- ❖ **Self-directed in own learning with a love for new advanced knowledge**
- ❖ **Equanimity, level-headedness, emotional stability**
- ❖ **A genuine interest in and liking for gifted learners**
- ❖ **Recognition of the the importance of intellectual development**
- ❖ **Strong belief in individual differences and individualisation**
- ❖ **Highly developed teaching skill and knowledge.**

Effective teachers of the gifted from the learners' point of view.

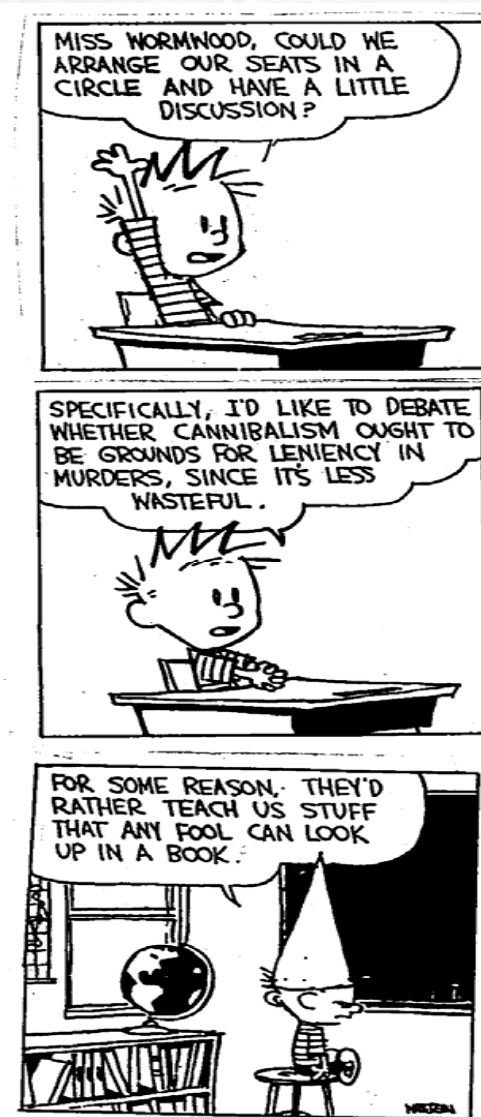
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- ❖ Patient
- ❖ Sense of humour
- ❖ Moves quickly through material
- ❖ Treats each as an individual
- ❖ Doesn't have to be a sage on the stage all the time
- ❖ Consistently gives good feedback.

A teacher I learn well with

	Year 6	Year 8
❖ lets me study at my own pace.	9	7
❖ lets me choose how I will work.	7	7
❖ has a good sense of humour.	6	11
❖ is well organised and makes everyone work.	2	2
❖ understands my interests.	12	9
❖ lets me choose who I will work with.	4	4
❖ gives me challenging work.	7	6
❖ tells me how I must do my work.	4	2

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Teacher Qualities

A Yr 6:

Like, you need to tell them what you're interested in and so they can see it. Like something's are blatantly obvious like me and my basketball. But other things that maybe they can't see as easily, you need to tell them.

W Yr 6:

Last year I had a teacher – I like one with humour 'cause last year I had a teacher some days she was nice. Some days she was a bit annoyed. But this year I have a really nice teacher and she's always nice. I think. And last year I had a teacher and some people were sarcastic to her. And she thought it was really funny. And she thought it was really funny and then I was sarcastic and she just got annoyed with me. And I was a bit sad.

A Yr 8:

Usually the teacher sets us all one piece of work. I remember other schools I went to the teacher might say, "Okay, you lot come down onto the mat with me while you guys you go on to FSM page 196, Exercise 4. So that people of lower ability can get what *they* need and if the people of higher ability need any help they can still go down there and ask. But they get what they need as well.

J: Yr 8

Yeah, if I have a teacher who just lets the class do it themselves I kind of instantly build an impression of someone who just lets the class run ... – doesn't have the – obviously hasn't had much experience in that area because you just can't let a class run. The class just doesn't run if you let it run. It will go off in all directions. I like a teacher who gets everybody working at the one time and keeps them reasonably quiet but not a deathly hush.

P Yr 6:

Yeah, definitely. Yeah. Because they give me help and stuff like that about them. Sometimes it helps because my teacher gave me a stamp because she knew that stamp collecting was my interest. And sometimes they might give you a book on it like my teacher did when I was interested in war and stuff like that she gave me a picture book on it. So the kind of teacher – it's really important that the teacher you have understands your thinking and helps you to work. And gives you the challenge to work?

J:Yr 6

'Cause, I guess I - 'cause I feel more comfortable in an environment where someone is happy to make a joke and happy to laugh and won't enforce things heavily with growling and snapping at people but a good sense of humour is definitely one of the main things that I need. I don't need it but I'd like it.

D Yr 8:

I don't like teachers that are straight and you can't joke around or anything. You've got to your work then and there and you can't have a chat or anything. Like I like, sort of, having a talk with the teacher too. Like my teacher he's into sports and we can have a talk about the rugby or something. And you know, some straight teachers don't have a sense of humour or anything. They might just think: Oh, yeah. You know.

Research on Instructional Delivery

From Rogers, Karen. (2002) *Reforming gifted education*.
Arizona: Great Potential Press Inc.

Instructional Process Modifications

- ❖ Gifted and talented students tend to mistrust the benefits of small group learning: care must be taken that the tasks demonstrate that the group can do better than the individual.
- ❖ Gifted and talented students perform significantly more highly when the majority of their time is spent in true peer interactions (academic core areas only).

Bill Watterson (1994) Homicidal Psycho Jungle Cat.
London: Warner Books



I learn best in group work when

	Year 6	Year 8
❖ I am with my friends.	11	8
❖ the teacher picks the group.	0	1
❖ I am with people of the same ability.	14	15
❖ there is a mix of boys and girls	3	2
❖ I am with people with the same interests.	12	13
❖ I am with 3 or less people.	6	6
❖ I am with 4 or more people.	1	1
❖ we have our own jobs to do.	4	4

Mixed Ability Groups

A Yr 6

I don't actually get to do any learning. It's more me who does the teaching in those sort of groups. I seem to help other people rather than try and help myself. It's nothing much really I can do with such a wide range of abilities.

G Yr 6

Yes, it's kind of annoying when, like, you're with somebody and they kind of, really slow the group down because they're kind of – it's not their fault but they're kind of getting behind everybody and you have to wait for them.

P Yr 6

Because if I have to work with people who are a bit less I sometimes feel that they're wrecking it. For me and themselves. I just feel that it (*the work*) goes downhill.

P Yr 6

Because people that are slow. You know they don't work very fast. I seem to go ahead and I do all the stuff and they just sit there. And sometimes they come up with stupid ideas that are no good. They won't work. It makes me feel a bit angry.



M Yr 8

Well, I get quite bored because I don't usually have anyone to talk to.

D Yr 8

If I'm more near the top then I'll try to take control more. To try to get them to keep up. Sometimes if they don't know what to do and I do they go "Oh you write it out or you do it" or something. ...I feel that's putting too much pressure on me and then they're not doing anything. It's supposed to be group work not, like, individual.

H Yr 8

Well, if we've got people of lower ability I'm normally way too far in front of them and they don't understand and you've got to go over it five or six times. It's not that bad but I still prefer to mix with people of the same ability 'cause, yeah, we can all think of the same ideas ..

F Yr 8

Well sometimes if you are the brightest person there you kind of feel you're doing all the work sometimes. And no-one else really understands what you are trying to do.

Same Ability Groups

A Yr 6

It makes the work a lot quicker to do. We can under-stand what each other is saying.

G Yr 6

... if you're in the same ability you kind of know like, you're the same as them. You're kind of – you can work at the same pace as them. That's pretty much all it is.

K Yr 6

Because we're all at the same level and we're all not having to catch up or wait for other people.

P Yr 6

I don't really care who I work with as long as they're a good person and they're of the same ability.

T Yr 6

Because we basically all have the same idea. We all have the same ability and it makes it a lot easier. But we still all have different points of views and things.



J Yr 6

Yeah, that's cause we can all go at the same speed. And nobody's quicker than anyone else or slower.

S Yr 6

Like, if I was with one of my best friends like J we have the same abilities. We almost even think the same. So people who think the same as me would be good to work with. Also you don't have as many arguments. And I guess it is easier to make choices with it. They motivate me I guess. And they help me work faster.

H Yr8

Probably because it is easier to converse with them....It's fine if it's higher but then I sometimes get confused so I like it better when they're (the same).

D Yr 8

I like to work with people who can keep up with me. But I don't like going with people that are too fast, 'cause then I 'm, like, left behind.you have to push yourself 'cause you've got to keep up. And then you can learn from them.

Research on curriculum for the gifted.

From Rogers, Karen. (2002) *Reforming gifted education*.
Arizona: Great Potential Press Inc.

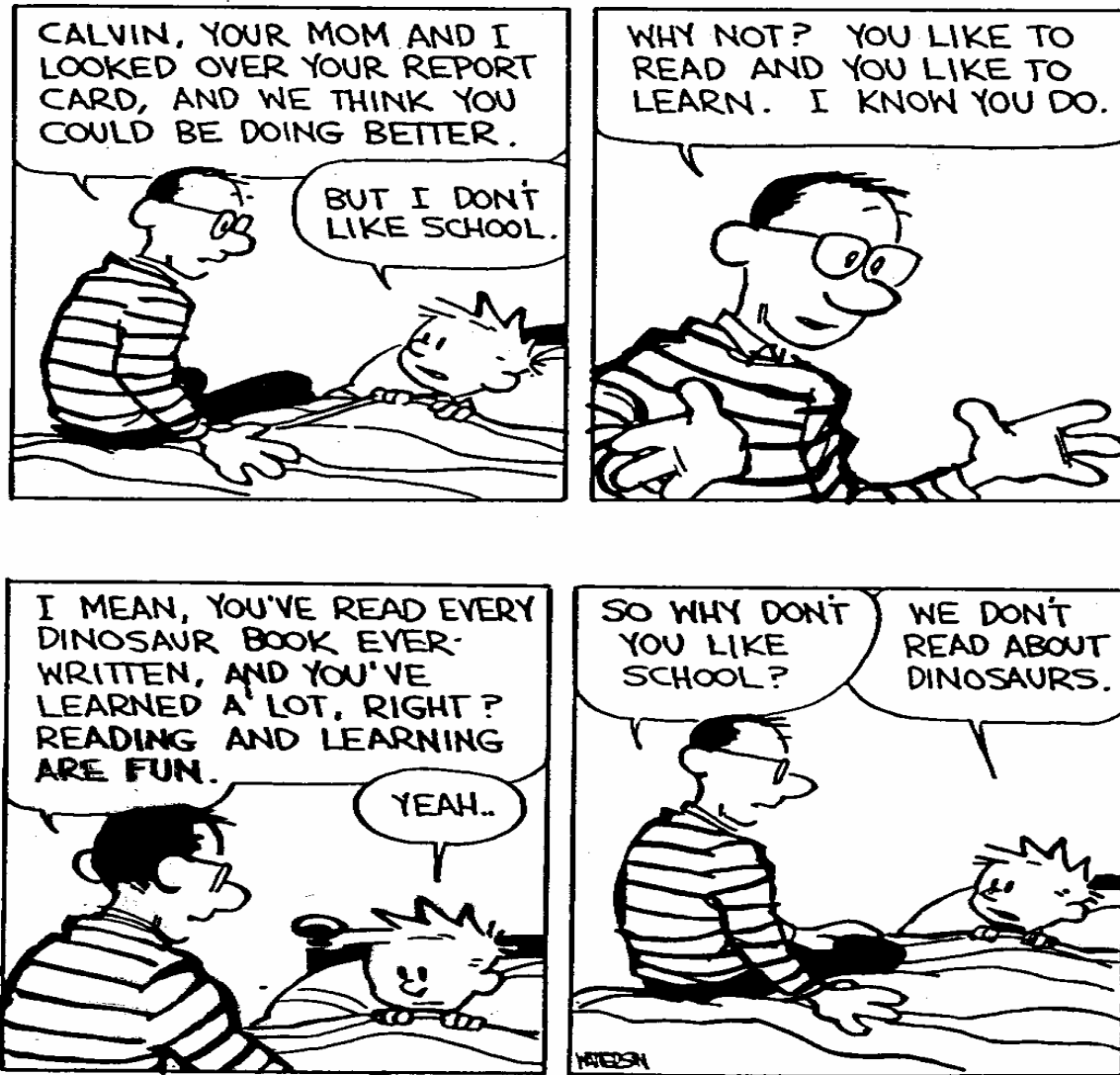
Content modifications.

- ❖ Gifted and talented boys in particular, are motivated by learning the way things work and the ways professionals work.
- ❖ Gifted and talented learners as decontextualists tend to learn most successfully when they are given the whole concept, in depth, upfront and then allowed to break it down through analysis.

I will do my best work on subjects that

	Year 6	Year 8
❖are an interest of mine.	17	16
❖the teacher likes.	0	0
❖are new to me.	5	3
❖can be used in real life.	5	6
❖I already know lots about.	6	6
❖let me solve problems	4	5
❖need technology or equipment.	12	8
❖are harder than usual.	2	4

Bill Watterson (1994) Homicidal Psycho Jungle Cat.
London: Warner Books



Areas of interest

Maths

Computers

Animals/insects - scientific, historic and practical

Sport

Ancient history - Greek, Egyptian, Roman, prehistoric

History - Plantagenet, Norman, medieval, wars

Reading/Writing fantasy stories

Electronics

Chemistry

Biology

Physics

Technology

Mechanics

Art history

Video making

Quotes on interests

A Yr 8

Yeah, mechanical, archaeology, sport, art history, the world and world's greatest battles and things.

H Yr 6

Stuff like electronics. Yeah, I have about three shoeboxes of electronics at home. When I've got extra money I go into town. I normally ask my dad if I can go to Dick Smiths.

S Yr 6

In Term One this year I did extinction. And in the next term I did monsters: the mythical and also as in genetically engineered monsters. And in the third term we didn't have a choice that was really bad. But we found a way to make it motivating. We had to study about coal – burning coal. We found all about SO₂ and that Feltex Corporation that make carpets they're using – they're burning coal to make energy. So we wanted to protest and tell them about what's wrong with it. We didn't get the chance to but oh well. And then in Term 4 I did meerkats. And in Term 1 this year I did camouflage. And now this term I'm doing eco-location.

Quotations on Content

... are harder than usual - Year 6 = 2 Year 8 = 4

*Boys were put off by word "harder"- accepted that "challenging" would have been better.
Discussion with boys found more agreement with this statement.*

D Yr 8

Challenging – yeah because – challenging I could handle fine. It's kind of the same.

W Yr 6.(So which do you prefer, being the best in the middle class or being not the best in the top math's class?)

Not the best in the top math's class. 'Cause I know I'm doing work that is not too easy. And I'm learning new things. Otherwise it's pointless if you don't learn the things on work.

K Yr 6

It gives me a nice challenge to work on.

P Yr 8

You know things that are too easy it's boring. But things that are challenging it's fun.



F Yr 8

I enjoy it more because it makes my brain work harder.

E Yr 8

Well, in class I always get bored if it's really easy. And I seem to get distracted and I don't try my hardest and when it is harder I want to get it done; I want to figure out how to do it and I try harder.

J Yr 8

If it's not a challenge then inevitably I'll make it a challenge. I'll want to go deeper. If I was doing things that were too easy for me continually I think I would maybe leave the school.

J Yr 6

I ask the teachers for something harder but they say you need to learn the basics and generally I have to every extent so I don't see what they're saying.

... are an interest of mine

J Yr 8

If you're interested you're likely to work more with it. If you're not interested you just do your work quickly but if you're like interested, you take more time to make it better.

J Yr 6

It's fun and I do work a bit harder. 'Cause I know it's just something that I'll be liking.

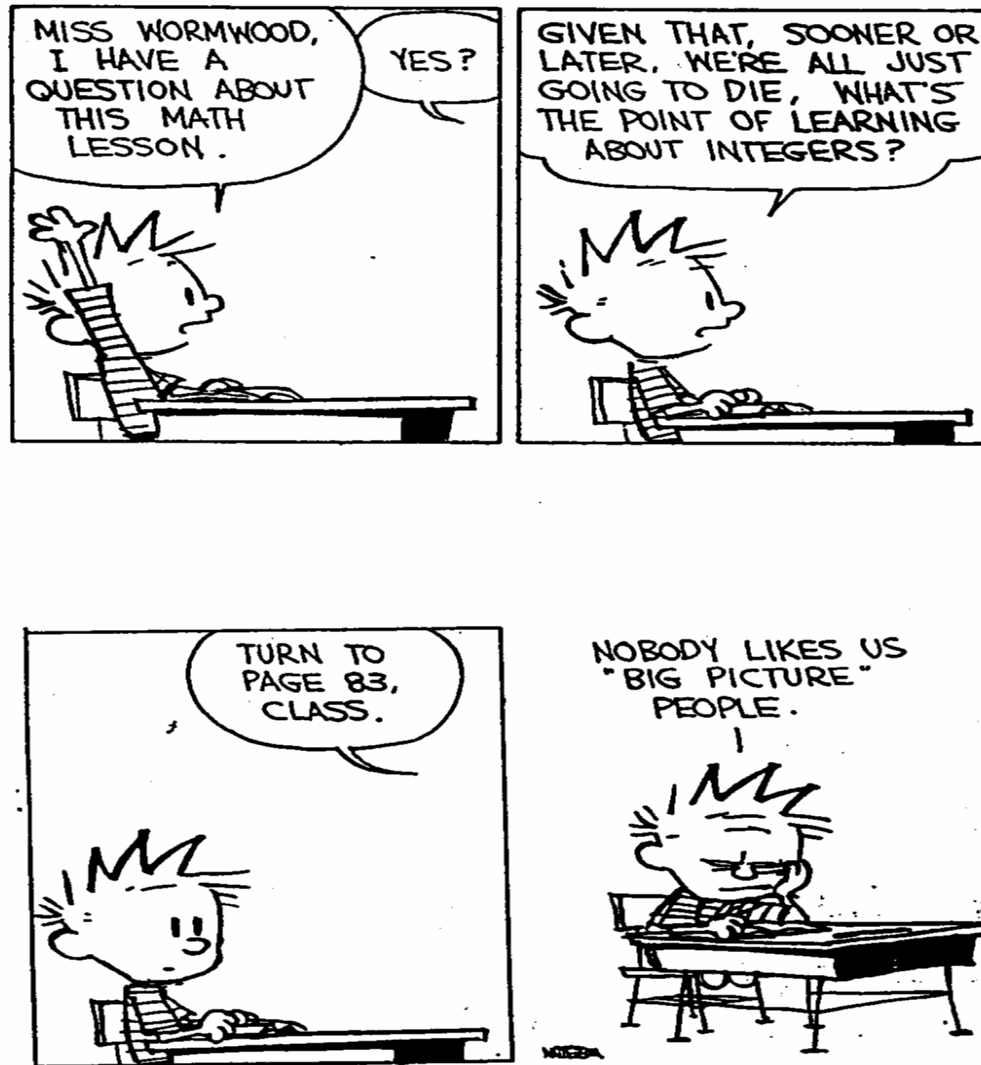
H Yr 8

Cause subjects I don't like I just normally kind of, click off sometimes. We don't really have any law or anything. Anything to do with law. I want to be a lawyer.

M Yr 8

And mainly because I'm thinking about the future. That I don't want – I want to do work that will help me in the future instead of one that won't. Is just for fun or something. I want stuff that will allow me to get on in the future.

Bill Watterson (1992) The Indispensable Calvin and Hobbes.
Great Britain: Universal Press Syndicate



The way I like to work most is when

	Year 6	Year 8
❖ I know I will get good marks.	3	3
❖ it is part of a competition.	6	5
❖ it is about my interests.	15	12
❖ I can teach others.	3	1
❖ I can work at my own speed.	9	11
❖ I can present in different ways.	4	4
❖ there are rewards for working well.	4	4
❖ I can work on my own.	7	8

Pace

L Yr 6

If I hurry it won't be so neat and everything. But I know not to go too slow. If I go slow I'll fall behind.

H Yr 6

Let's me learn at my own pace. Yeah, in some areas particularly and some things I've already done and there's also some stuff like I'm not too good at, and I need to work a little bit slower.

P Yr 8

Yeah. Because if you have to study at the same pace as the slowest person then that's a bit bad. But if you *are* the slowest person it's better.

R Yr 8

'Cause I'm not really a fast worker so I take quite a long time to do things.

S Yr 6

Well I'm not really that fast at learning and sometimes the teacher writes us things about all these other things to do (when we have finished).

C Yr 6

Well working at your own speed it means you're not getting rushed. And if you have too much time off you never end up actually doing anything.

D Yr 8

Means there's no-one to distract you and it means you know where *you're* going. So nobody else is interfering.

A Yr 6

Oh, easy I just finish it so early and other people who aren't quite as smart and I have to wait for them for something and I get pretty bored. I get sick of doing early finisher stuff all the time.

M Yr 8

Because I like just choosing how I want to work. Like, if I want to do half an hour of this and half an hour of that and half an hour of that. Then it's easier for me instead of doing one and half hours of this, finishing it and then doing one and half hours of something else and finishing that.

T Yr 8

Yeah, I find it really helpful. Like, I prefer working in short bursts rather than one long period. And if I get put with some people that really annoy me often I just won't be able to think at all.

L Yr 6

Well it's usually like if they make me hurry then I don't find much out about the subject. But if I study at my own pace I can look up and find heaps out about the subject.

Choice

W: Yr 6

Sometimes you might decide that would be good 'cause you know you'll like it. And you can - even if it's boring work - you can do it the way you want and have fun.

S: YR 6

Yep, definitely. The Learning Centre is really - it really fits with the way I learn. It lets me choose the way I want to work. And technology is really useful because well, you're not exactly told what to do so you can – there's lots of choices

F Yr 6

When we got given a little bit of choice by saying – if we had to draw something we could choose how we're going to draw it. And like, I drew it my own way to make it interesting. And in maths when you have to write something down I write it in a weird font or something.

E: Yr 8

Well in class we are doing the enquiry thing. We get to choose what we research on and how we present it and how we go about it and all that. And that's cool. 'Cause that way we don't *have* to present it in the compulsory thing. We don't *have* to do a video; we don't *have* to do anything. We can choose.

L: Yr 6

Well I don't want heaps and heaps of choice. Otherwise I might pick something that I don't really like. But if it's two or three things I pick my favourite thing.

G: Yr 8

I guess you'd just find it easier rather than just saying: You have to do this, this way. You can just find your own way round what you're doing. And your own answer.

J: Yr 8

I do like choice except if I'm told to do something I'll do it. But if I get a choice I sometimes find it hard to *make* a choice. And I just prefer the teachers to give me the choice. Otherwise I'll waste too much time just deciding.

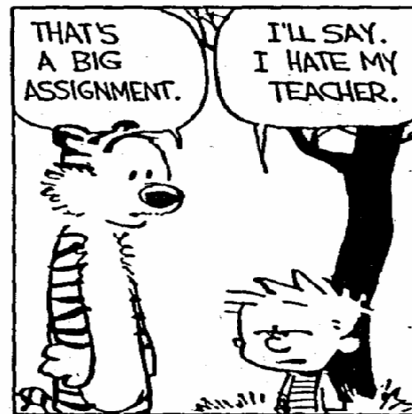
E Yr 8

Well I like to make choices but I need *some* guidance because I'd just be outside all day. I'd like to do like maths the majority of the day because it's my favourite. Writing, 'cause I enjoy that as well. I wouldn't do spelling if I had a complete choice but I have to do that 'cause it's not my strongest point.

Bill Watterson (1992) The Indispensable Calvin and Hobbes.
Great Britain: Universal Press Syndicate



WE'RE SUPPOSED TO RESEARCH OUR SUBJECT, WRITE IT UP, AND PRESENT IT TO THE CLASS WITH A VISUAL AID.





Research findings on boys in education relevant to giftedness and talent.

Classroom behaviours resemble those of learning disabled boys - aggression, poor concentration, low task commitment, challenging to the teacher.

Shaywitz et al (2001)

**“Boy code” for academic boys
keep your head down
cope with bullying
suppress emotions**

Pollack (1999)

- ❖ Boys connect high achievement and academic study with femininity.
- ❖ They differentially manage their success in the formal 'academic' school and their status (high or low) in the 'social' school.
- ❖ High achievers tend to
- ❖ avoid 'studious' behaviour
- ❖ play down achievements
- ❖ disrupt by being off task and using humour
- ❖ won't talk seriously about school issues
- ❖ ridicule girls
- ❖ Maintaining self identity as a high achiever came from
- ❖ being in a school with other high achievers
- ❖ having strong joint interests with other boys (sport, role playing games)
- ❖ ignoring bullying
- ❖ strength through close friendships.
- ❖ Gifted boys used an array of strategies and techniques to avoid "sissy" and "geek" labels in an ongoing struggle to establish the right to be themselves - they live underground most of the time though.

(Studies reviewed in this literature were pre-dominantly conducted in Secondary Schools.)

Renold (2001)

Gifted and talented boys

- ❖ **have more limited choices**
- ❖ **have self-concept problems which confound participation in gifted programmes**
- ❖ **suffer peer bullying and ridicule so hide their ability**
- ❖ **with more strongly macho models and expectations were more at risk in school from internal conflict between satisfaction with academic aspects and successes which lead to a rejection of self**
- ❖ **do not have permission to deal publicly with social and emotional issues**
- ❖ **are susceptible to unhappiness, frustration and aggression - behaviour extremes that schools find hard to deal with.**
- ❖ **need close mother-son relationships without over protection or pressure**
- ❖ **need supportive father-son relationships with good emotional as well as physical and practical connections**
- ❖ **have too many options in high school for careers which creates choice issues**
- ❖ **love competition - regardless of others' views**

Alvino (1991)

Conclusions from Smart Boys: Talent, Manhood, and the Search for Meaning.

**Barbara Kerr and Sanford Cohn
Great Potential Press 2001.**

- ❖ **Most gifted boys are characterised by intensity, curiosity and high activity levels.**
- ❖ **Asynchronous development can lead to difficulties with emotional expressiveness, peer relationships and athletics.**
- ❖ **Although most gifted boys are well adjusted, they do experience conflicts between expectations of masculinity and their love of learning.**
- ❖ **Preschool boys may benefit more from an enriched preschool environment than from staying home with a parent.**
- ❖ **Gifted boys can often suffer an “intellectual death” in late primary school when they refuse to do homework or completes classroom tasks. They need careful monitoring of homework and more challenge in class.**
- ❖ **Gifted boys need help in expressing emotions, support for non-traditional activities and interests, and encouragement in discovering their true selves.**

- ❖ Although underachieving gifted boys have more in common with underachievers in general than with other gifted students, there are important differences.
- ❖ Underachieving gifted boys may be socially immature, may experience more emotional problems, may engage in antisocial behaviour and may have low self concepts.
- ❖ However it is also true that they may have a deep need for understanding of the world and themselves, a thirst for knowledge and the capacity to change negative behaviours when intellectually challenged.
- ❖ It is necessary to consider the full range of hypotheses about underachieving behaviour before choosing and intervention.
- ❖ Interventions for underachievement include retesting or reinterpretation of the test by someone trained in the understanding the traits of gifted individuals, proper academic placement and counselling or mentoring.
- ❖ Existential counselling focused on the discovery of meaning and purpose is often helpful.

“you think of yourself as normal”

J Yr 8

I can't tell if I'm gifted. I don't think anyone can tell if they're gifted. You have to be told. You can't tell inside yourself that you're gifted because you wouldn't have a clue. You'd be just going on ahead and - because it is your brain-pace – your brain-pace and you don't think of anyone else's you just think of your own and you think of yourself as normal so you can't tell if you're the 'gifted one' because you think you're the 'normal one'. You're the normal – I don't know, I couldn't tell if I was...