

Methods of Identifying Gifted Students
Strengths and Limitations

Method	Strengths	Limitations
Baseline	<p>Breadth of assessment issues</p> <p>Can involve qualitative and quantitative data</p>	<p>Can vary across the country</p> <p>Some schemes lack experience</p>
Ability Tests	<p>Can give an objective evaluation of performance on certain skills in comparison with others of similar age</p> <p>Relatively easy to administer and inexpensive</p> <p>Can be useful in identifying high ability children who are underachieving</p>	<p>Less reliable for younger children</p> <p>Some tests (e.g. verbal reasoning) can be perceived as unfairly difficult for some ethnic and social groups and dyslexic students</p> <p>Format usually requires preparation or can be daunting</p> <p>Need to be careful in determining exactly what skills, aptitudes and competences are being measured – usually limited to measuring analytic skills and do not reward divergent thinking</p>
Class Teacher Nomination	<p>Offers opportunity to recognise students' responses to teaching, levels of initiative and interest, lateral thinking and extent of problem solving.</p> <p>Uses detailed knowledge of class teacher and makes use of teacher's ongoing assessments of students</p>	<p>Can be very subjective if not undertaken against agreed criteria.</p> <p>Dependent on access to experienced class teacher with confident, challenging and flexible teaching style and therefore can be disrupted by teacher changes or supply issues</p>
Classroom Observation	<p>Can help confirm other assessments through systematic data collection based on agreed criteria</p> <p>Assess child in familiar context doing familiar tasks</p>	<p>Time consuming if done in addition to normal classroom practice</p> <p>Can be subjective if not undertaken rigorously and on a series of occasions (including variety of teaching contexts)</p>

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Examination of Student Work	<p>Good measure of recorded outcomes</p> <p>Help refine teacher expectations through analysis of high quality work</p> <p>Can be useful when done in clusters</p>	<p>Can be subjective if not undertaken rigorously</p> <p>More easily measures achievement than potential</p> <p>Reliant on access to good range of learning opportunities and high teacher expectation</p> <p>Restricts range of potential measured to that recordable, limiting especially for youngest children</p>
Subject Specific Checklists	<p>Can allow children with specific learning disabilities (e.g. dyslexic children) opportunity to demonstrate ability in other subject area</p> <p>Can be useful in identifying children with high ability in specific area</p> <p>Can draw on strengths of specialist subject teacher and contribute to curriculum design</p>	<p>Extensive checklists can be time consuming and unwieldy to administer</p> <p>Checklists cannot be relevant for each individual</p>
Generic Checklists	<p>Easily accessible</p> <p>Simple to handle</p>	<p>Can run the risk of creating stereotypes</p> <p>Too general to be useful in curriculum terms</p> <p>Validity remains questionable</p>
Reading Tests	<p>Easy to administer</p> <p>Reading competence can give useful indication of future performance</p> <p>Most schools have access to some age standardised score, which allows for “Summer Born” factor to be considered</p>	<p>Reading is a skill rather than an ability, and high scores on a reading test are not a reliable indicator of cognitive ability</p>

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Method	Strengths	Limitations
Creativity Tests	Measures abilities not normally assessed as part of school assessment Offers divergent thinkers a change to display their ability	Time consuming to administer Validity remains questionable
Educational Psychologists	Invaluable in identifying high ability linked to complex issues e.g. areas of SEN	Time consuming and expensive Unnecessary for most gifted students
Parents and Peers	Intimate knowledge of the individual. Can take account of performance outside school environment	Subjective and difficult to give clear criteria Younger children would find it difficult and possibly divisive to judge peers

With thanks to © London Gifted & Talented ("LG&T") for providing the materials on which this article/section was based.