

### **Strategies for Working with Children with Special Needs**

It is inevitable that you will have the privilege and opportunity to work with students with special needs in the learning environment. Accommodations and modifications for those students to be successful in the classroom should be left by the permanent teacher. You will come in contact with students with learning disabilities as well as those students who have a high ability, often referred to as gifted students. Consider these tips and strategies when working with your students who demonstrate characteristics of being gifted.

One constant about gifted students is the fact that they are full of questions and answers. Providing for their instructional needs is not an easy task and will certainly extend you to the full limits of your own creativity and inventiveness.

- Allow gifted students to design and follow through on self-initiated projects. Have them pursue questions of their own choosing.
- Provide gifted students with lots of open-ended activities.
- Keep the emphasis on divergent thinking- helping them focus on many possibilities rather than any set of predetermined answers.
- Provide opportunities for students to engage in active problem-solving to arrive at their own conclusions.
- Encourage gifted students to take on leadership roles that enhance portions of the classroom program.
- Provide numerous opportunities for gifted students to read extensively about subjects that interest them.
- Do not make gifted students do busy work.
- Do not make gifted students work with slower students unless they are part of a tutoring program and have volunteered to do so.

These suggestions are referenced from  
<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/special-education/newteacher>

Additional suggestions in working with other students with special needs are noted in this article.