



## Featured Topic - Introverted Gifted Students

We hope everyone is having a great start to their school year! On the spectrum of introverts and extroverts, temperament can greatly impact how students interact in a classroom setting. Past research indicates that anywhere from one-third to one-half of the general population are introverts, with this percentage increasing to more than half in profoundly gifted population. In this issue, we are providing information about introverts to assist educators working with gifted students who exhibit this temperament.

### Guest Q&A

Critically acclaimed and award-winning author, [Christine Fonseca](#) is an educational psychologist dedicated to helping children and adults find their unique voice in the world. Her books delve into the world of giftedness, resiliency and temperament, with titles that include:

- [\*Quiet Kids: Help Your Introverted Child Succeed in an Extroverted World\*](#)
- [\*Emotional Intensity in Gifted Students: Helping Kids Cope with Explosive Feelings\*](#)
- [\*101 Success Secrets for Gifted Kids\*](#)
- [\*The Girl Guide: Finding Your Place in a Mixed-Up World\*](#)



To read the full Q&A text, click [here](#) as the following version has been edited.

### How does being an introvert or an extrovert impact students' behavior at school or in the classroom?

These temperaments refer to more than just behavior. It refers to the way a child processes energy, renews at the end of the day, interacts with the world and even learns. Introverts require solitude and a calm environment, while extroverts thrive in the social excitement that typically occurs on a school campus. In learning, the introverted child prefers to think about information before outwardly engaging with the material, and enjoys learning a lot about a few topics . . . Extroverts, on the other hand, often process information quickly and may appear impulsive in class. They like a survey-approach to learning and require significant stimulation throughout the day. The introvert may appear hesitant in class, "shy" or aloof. He or she may get agitated in a noisy classroom or during loud assemblies while the extrovert is often socially engaged and will thrive when things are busy. [Read More...](#)

### How are giftedness and temperament related, and what do teachers need to know about this topic?

. . . The gifted child may be either introverted or extroverted. Research and my own experience suggest that introversion occurs at a significantly higher rate among gifted individuals. This prevalence of introversion can further alienate gifted individuals in the typical classroom setting. In a typical classroom, this may be interpreted as not understanding the material. Introverts tend to pour themselves into their passions and are reluctant to transition away from preferred activities . . . Teachers can allow students a longer wait time than is



typical. Do not pre-judge the reserved or cautious nature of a student as indicative of a problem with social skills or lack of motivation. It could be you are just dealing with introversion and perhaps even a gifted introvert. [Read more...](#)

### **How can educators support introverted students?**

There are a number of ways a teacher can support introverted learners. First, create a balanced environment—one that allows for a mix of group and individual activities, and one that enables movement for the extrovert and periods of rest and calm for the introvert. Next, create safe zones for introverts, such as the library or a staff member's office, that they can use for respite during the day. Focus on teaching social skills like asking for help and initiating conversations within your classroom as well as embedding social competencies (problem solving and anger management) into your curriculum. Finally, create a culture of caring for all students by openly talking about temperament and learning style. [Read More...](#)

### **In terms of peer relations, is there anything that teachers can do to assist introverted students?**

Relationships with peers are tricky for gifted children in general. Add the aspect of introversion and it is easy to understand why friendships are such a large area of concern for educators and parents alike. Fortunately, there are many things teachers can do to support gifted introverts. Such as, understanding the differences between shyness and introversion . . . To help with developing social connections, focus on teaching social skills like conversation initiation, and problem solving and, pair introverted children with similar interests together. Finally, encourage introverted children to use their safe zones during lunch or recess, and bring a friend along. [Read more...](#)

### **What are some commonly asked questions by educators regarding introverted, gifted students (and your responses)?**

I get many questions regarding teaching introverts and encouraging participation without draining their energy. My advice, allow introverted children to learn through a balance of group and individual projects. Furthermore, allow introverted students an opportunity to study areas of interest at a deeper level. These considerations, as well as the previously mentioned suggestions, can support the wide variety of learners in a typical class, including the introvert and the gifted introvert. [Read more...](#)

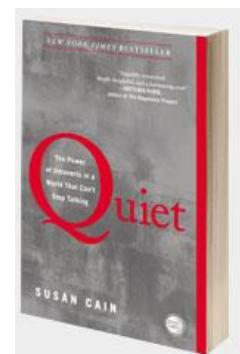
A more thorough discussion of temperament, introversion and supporting both introverted and gifted learners can be found in Christine's books listed above as well as her upcoming new release *Raising the Shy Child: A Parent's Guide to Social Anxiety* (Prufrock Press, March 2015).

## **Resources**

### **Chapter 11, *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking***

[Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking](#) by [Susan Cain](#) contains a section in Chapter 11 discussing how teachers can work with introverted students. The author provides a detailed list (p. 255 and 256), which has been summarized below. Please refer to the complete list in *Quiet* for additional strategies on how to assist introverted students.

- **Don't seat quiet kids in the "high interaction" areas of the classroom . . .** they will feel more threatened and have trouble concentrating.
- **Don't think of introversion as something that needs to be cured . . .** Pat Adams, former head of the Emerson School for gifted students in Michigan is quoted ". . . We think about introverted kids as having a different learning style."
- Introverts often have one or two deep interests not shared by their peers . . . studies show **this sort of intensity is a prerequisite for talent development.**



- **Balance teaching methods to serve all students**, for example extroverts like movement, stimulation and collaborative work while introverts prefer lectures, downtime and independent projects. **Some collaborative work is fine for introverts**, even beneficial, but in small groups – pairs or threesomes – and carefully structured so each student knows their role. **Teach all students to work independently** – extroverts and introverts.
- If your school has a selective admissions policy based on student's performance in a play group, know that many introverted kids clam up in groups of strangers.

On the *Quiet* website there is a free [Teacher's Guide](#) that can be used in a variety of academic disciplines to accompany the book, and provide greater insight into the interaction between the two temperament styles: extroversion and introversion.

### Other Books

- [Book Review](#) of *Quiet Kids: Help Your Introverted Child Succeed in an Extroverted World* by C. Fonseca
- [The Hidden Gifts of the Introverted Child: Helping Your Child Thrive in an Extroverted World](#)

### Articles

- [Make Your Class Cozy For Gifted Introverts](#)
- [Introversion: The Often Forgotten Factor Impacting the Gifted](#) - Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG)
- [The Gifted Introvert](#)
- [Introversion and Giftedness](#) - online article and resource links
- [Tips for Parents: Finding the Extroverted Side of You – Introverted Children](#)

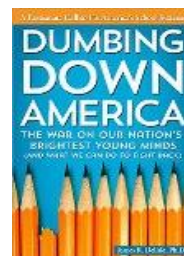
### In the News

- September 13 - *Missoulian*, [UM receives \\$1.5M to train teachers in gifted education](#) (K. Haake)  
 August 21 - *Medical Daily*, [The Brain Of An Introvert Compared To That Of An Extrovert](#) (L. Bushak)  
 August 16 - *EdSurge*, [Helping Introverted Students Succeed in the Classroom](#) (K. Finley)  
 August 13 - *Edutopia.org*, [How Learning Profiles can Strengthen Your Teaching](#) (J. McCarthy)  
 August 12 - *Psychology Today*, [Close to Tragic: Unconsidered Personality](#) (J. Cardillo)  
 July 28 - *Edutopia.org/Differentiated Blog*, [15+ Readiness Resources for Student Success](#) (J. McCarthy)

### Gifted News

#### Now Available - Dr. Jim Delisle's New Book *Dumbing Down America*

At a time when the U.S. education system consistently lags behind its international peers, Dr. Jim Delisle's new book, *Dumbing Down America*, is filled with specific examples of how gifted children are being shortchanged by a nation that believes smart kids will succeed on their own. This book packs a powerful message: If we want our nation to prosper, we must pay attention to its most intelligent youth. Available now from [Prufrock Press](#), you can order your copy today. Plus, read this [recent interview](#) with Dr. Delisle on the *Gifted Parenting Support* blog.



#### Largest Undergraduate Scholarship in the Nation Available to High-Achieving, Low-Income Students



The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation is accepting applications for its College Scholarship Program, the largest undergraduate scholarship in the country. Recipients will be awarded as much as \$40,000 per year for four years for

tuition, books, living expenses and other required fees. Up to 40 spaces are available to high-achieving high school seniors with financial need who seek to attend the nation's best four-year colleges and universities. The application period will close on November 4, 2014. For eligibility details, click [here](#).

### **National Association for Gifted Children Launches Redesigned Website**

The [National Association for Gifted Children \(NAGC\)](#) recently launched a redesign of their website. The new site was created with various audiences in mind, such as educators, parents, administrators, college and university faculty, elected officials and reporters. With the enhanced design and navigation, users can easily search and find updated information on a number of issues. The [Information and Publications](#) section contains a wealth of resources, including a link to the NAGC [Gifted and Talented Resources Directory](#) and [Gifted by State](#) data. Much of this information results from the work done on behalf of NAGC members to keep the need for quality programs and services for high-ability learners front and center.



## **Davidson News**

### **2014 Davidson Fellows Announced**

The Davidson Institute announces the 2014 Davidson Fellows! These 20 extraordinary young people, all 18 years old or younger, have completed graduate-level work in their various fields of study, including science, technology, engineering, mathematics, music, literature, philosophy and outside the box, to earn \$50,000, \$25,000 and \$10,000 scholarships. Since 2001, more than \$5.8 million has been awarded to 246 Davidson Fellows. To read more about these amazing young people and their project descriptions, visit the [Meet the Davidson Fellows](#). Scholarship eligibility and application information can be found on the Davidson Fellows [How to Apply](#) page.



### **Davidson Academy Application Now Available for 2015-2016**

The Davidson Academy of Nevada, a free public day school for profoundly gifted pupils on the University of Nevada, Reno campus, is now accepting applications for the 2015-2016 school year. Application materials can be downloaded at [www.DavidsonAcademy.UNR.edu](http://www.DavidsonAcademy.UNR.edu). Applications are reviewed on a monthly basis with a final deadline of April 1, 2015. The Davidson Academy is hosting tours on **Sept. 26, Oct. 24, Nov. 21** and **Dec. 12**. These tours provide an opportunity for prospective students and their families to visit the school and meet instructors, staff and current Academy students. An RSVP is required. Please click [here](#) for more information and to RSVP.



### **Educators Guild Facebook**

All educators, and people interested in gifted education, are invited to join the [Educators Guild Discussion Group](#) on Facebook and contribute to the ongoing conversation about how to best serve the academic needs of our nation's brightest students.



## **Closing Thought**

*"It is so easy to conclude . . . that the quiet child at the back of the classroom is not interested in what is being said, or distracted, or unable to concentrate, or slow to respond, when in fact she is simply reflecting, thinking things over and making all the wonderful connections we hope for."*

~ Dr. Trevor Tebbs in the *Psychology Today* article, [Close to Tragic: Unconsidered Personality](#)

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