

Top Ten Myths in Gifted Education

(Music)

(The sound of tools being moved around)

(Telephone rings)

Student in the hat: Hello, Mythbusters. Oh, yes, Dr. Grasmick. Yes, ma'am. The ten myths and truths of GT education... uh-huh uh-huh... We'll get right on it!

(Sound of the telephone being hung up)

(Sound of an alarm beeping)

Student in the hat: We got one!

(Sounds of more objects being moved around)

Student in a striped sweater: Hey!

Student in the hat: Hey!

Girl in a striped sweater: What you doin'?

Student in the hat: For decades, myths related to GT education have distorted the perceptions of not only what gifted students need in the classroom, but also what they can offer the nation now and in the future

Student in a striped sweater: The National Association for gifted children has compiled decades of research that the spells of these myths join us as we present the research that the truth supports.

(Sound of more objects being moved)

(Music)

Student in a striped sweater: The 10 Myths and Truths of Gifted Education.

(Music)

(Coughing!)

(Music continues)

Myth 1

Offscreen voice: Mr. Policymaker, Ready 5, 4, 3, 2, Go!

Mr. Policymaker: These are tough economic times, and we policymakers must set priorities.

Everyone knows gifted students don't need help; they'll do just fine on their own.

(Tearing of paper)

Student-Athlete: Hey, if I were your star athlete, would you expect me to train for the Olympics without a coach? I need the guidance and support of great teachers, just like all kids do. I'm not bragging, but sometimes in a regular grade-level class, I don't learn anything new until January. I get bored and frustrated, and I just hate school. That's when I start to tune out, and my grades drop. And that's definitely not doing fine!

Myth 2

Principal: As a school principal, I set the goal for the teachers to challenge every student, so the gifted kids will be just fine in a regular classroom.

Classroom student: I know my teachers try to challenge me, but sometimes they just don't understand what it is I need. And even when they do understand, it's hard for them to make changes to the regular curriculum. I've even heard teachers say, "We just haven't had any training in teaching students like you."

Myth 3

Classroom Teacher: We teachers need to keep gifted students in regular classes in order to provide role models and challenges for other students.

(Someone offscreen clears their throat)

Student: The truth is, all kids get served with peers to challenge them. I know I do, but the best challenge for me is just within my grasp--not far beyond it. The other kids don't see me as a role model. They just say, "It's easy for you; you're smart."

Myth 4

(Sound of a microwave door closing)

Parent in a kitchen: As a parent, I believe that all children are gifted. It's not fair to label only some students that way.

Parent in a studio: Wow, I sure don't want to take anything away from other kids, but, in athletics, everyone accepts there are some really talented kids who make the varsity team. I mean, we wouldn't take away the Super Bowl, would we? We love to watch those athletes play. Why couldn't we think about academics in the same way?

Myth 5

School Counselor: As a School Counselor, I'm aware that gifted programs often employ accelerated placement options, and acceleration can be socially harmful to gifted students.

Student: When I was in third grade, I remember feeling really out of place in school and began to act out my frustration. My parents and teachers met, and soon I was placed in an advanced fourth-grade class; I felt really happy with the students that shared my interests. My grades began to pick up, and soon no one looked at me as younger or different. We were all on the same level

Myth 6

Professor: As a university professor, I can tell you that history clearly demonstrates that...

(Chair scrapes the floor)...gifted education programs are elitist.

Student: It wasn't until I turned middle school that my district started gifted programs. Maybe we didn't have the money, or maybe people didn't think that there were gifted kids in my school. All I know is that I was never challenged in elementary school, and there were kids there just like me to. Our gifted programs aren't about status; it's about people finding their place. I think it's elitist not to have a gifted program because you're making assumptions that some kid's education is less important than others.

Myth 7

Teacher: I'm the teacher of a student that can't be gifted; she gets poor grades.

Student: My parents and teachers are always telling me how smart I am, so why is it that I can't achieve more? I wish I knew why sometimes I'm afraid to stand out at other times I'm afraid to fail, so I just don't try anymore. I wish I knew someone who could break me out of this cycle!

Myth 8

Special Education Department Chair: As a Special Education Chair, our department has decided that this child can't be gifted. He had disabilities.

Special Education Student: In elementary school, I was in this special pullout program for my reading and writing problems. I didn't think anyone would have considered me for a gifted program, but, in the fourth grade, my teacher noticed that while I struggled in reading, I was her top student in mathematics, so she recommended me for her gifted math class. I'm thankful that I get to focus on my special abilities while still receiving help for my learning disability

Myth 9

Curriculum Coordinator: As a Curriculum Coordinator, our office has gifted and talented programs. We have Advanced Placement courses in high school.

Advanced Placement Student: As a student, I enjoy my college-level coursework in my advanced placement classes. These courses are for everyone who wants to work hard and get into a great college. I wish, though, that I didn't have to wait until high school to be so challenged. As much as I enjoy AP, I still long for opportunities to explore my own personal passion, which happens to be Aeronautics. That's why it is so important for our Gifted Department to allow us to work with a mentor, as well as provide opportunities to do our own research. That's what's really going to help me develop my talent!

Myth 10

School Board Member surrounded by the entire cast: All of us on the school board know we should do more for our gifted students, but these are tough economic times, and gifted education requires abundant resources.

Ensemble: Begin with the end in mind. Just begin! Begin by believing in us. We are your future world leaders and mentors, artists, teachers. Begin by believing in us. We don't ask for more than our share, only that which meets our needs. Your commitment has no cost in dollars. Yet, without your commitment, dollars will be spent. Begin by believing in us. Just begin!

Credits