

Adaptive Teaching Learner Discussion Template

Highly Able Learners



The coloured bubbles below link directly to the themes from the self-evaluation tool – How Good is OUR school? Part 2 (Wee HGIOS):

Theme 1:	Our relationships This includes friendships, relationships with teachers and other adults who support us, opportunities to influence things, equality and fairness, ethos and culture, feeling supported and cared for.
Theme 2:	Our learning & teaching This includes the curriculum, the quality of learning experiences, the range of teaching approaches and access to high-quality resources for learning.
Theme 3:	Our school & community This includes the facilities and environment for learning, availability of digital technology, the range of equipment for play and physical activity and ensuring everyone has good access to what's available. It also includes having positive links between our school and our families and with partner organisations in our community.
Theme 4:	Our health & wellbeing This includes access to good quality nutritious food as well as support for our emotional wellbeing, mental health and physical wellbeing.
Theme 5:	Our successes & achievements This includes opportunities for achievement in our school and in the community, being able to achieve the best possible progress, awards and qualifications, skills for employment and lifelong learning.



Context

Highly-able learners are those who are working, or have the potential to work, ahead of other learners their own age. They may be working, or have potential to work, at the higher level across the whole curriculum or in one or more curricular area.

Highly-able learners can also have unique needs which need to be considered and addressed through evidence-based instruction.

Like all learners they need a carefully planned curriculum and instruction that will allow them to continually progress. Highly able learners are entitled to additional support under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 as amended 2009.

Carol Ann Tomlinson (1997) imagines this concept as an escalator, continually moving to higher levels, as opposed to a staircase, which asks them to wait on a landing before moving up. Like all learners, highly able learners need ongoing sufficient levels of challenge, individually tailored to their abilities.

Teacher Narrative:

(The language of the questions should be tailored accordingly by school staff who know the needs and level of comprehension of the learners.)

Note: As this is related to highly-able learners, you may wish to undertake this discussion with a smaller focus group of learners identified by you and the school as 'highly-able' rather than the whole class. Use your professional discretion for this.

Today we are going to think about how we know and feel that we are working at the right level in our learning. To be at the 'right level', this would be where new learning is a little bit tricky at the beginning but with practise, we get better at it until we are really good at it. When we get really good at it, we move on to something a little bit trickier and the cycle begins again. Sometimes we can find our work too easy and we finish it all correctly and quickly. Other times, our work can be too hard and we struggle to complete it. This can happen sometimes but it is hoped that most of the time, you feel your work is 'just right'. Here are some questions for us to think about.

What do you think about your learning level most of the time? E.g. too easy, too hard, a mixture, just right...? How do you know it is too easy/too hard/just right?

In which areas do you find activities too easy/too hard/just right?

What do you do when you complete a task or activity quickly or before others?

If you have 'early finisher' tasks, what types of tasks are these? What do you think about these tasks? Are they easier/harder/the same as the task you completed early?

What do you think could be done to make your learning more challenging? What types of activities/tasks? Who could you work with?