

# 10 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR CLASS COZIER FOR GIFTED STUDENTS



Hi, I'm Ian Byrd, creator of [Byrdseed.com](https://www.byrdseed.com) and [Byrdseed.TV](https://www.byrdseed.tv). Here are ten concrete ideas for making your classroom compatible with gifted learners.

## 1. INTROVERSION

Introverts lose energy when interacting with people. Group work, riding the bus, and even recess will drain them. Your gifted students are more likely to be introverted than their peers. [Be ready!](#)

- Let them recharge. Silent reading, the option to work alone, and lectures all appeal to introverts.
- Introverts need wait time. If they can't answer, make it clear that it's okay to ask for more time, and you'll come back to them.
- I opened my doors early, providing board games and daily puzzles as recess alternatives. That playground can be a lonely place!

## 2. INTUITION

Your gifted students are probably intuitive thinkers. They learn with few repetitions and "figure it out" without following clear steps.

- Remove repetition in homework, classwork, and instruction. If they get it, let them move on.
- Question the need to "show your work." Is it *always* necessary, or can you give them some relief?
- Direct instruction isn't the only way to teach. Try out [concept attainment](#) and the [inductive model](#).

## 3. BEWARE THE 100%

Don't let gifted kids focus on perfect grades. If they consistently score 100%, the tasks are too easy!

- Praise effort, [not just results](#).
- Teach that [we get stronger when it's difficult](#), not when it's easy.'
- Gifted people may doubt that they're actually gifted. Learn about [impostor syndrome](#).

## 4. WORRY REDUCERS

Your [gifted students may be unusually worried about everything](#) from grades, to friendships, to disasters across the world. Some useful resources:

- [From Worrier to Warrior](#), by Dr. Dan Peters
- A [video from Dan](#) on "the worry monster."
- [Why Smart Kids Worry](#), by Allison Edwards

## 5. CLIMB BLOOM'S

Sometimes we keep kids at the low levels of Bloom's until they "prove themselves." But often it's those higher levels that would motivate an underperforming student.

- Move your students [towards flow](#), that feeling where time just flies by.
- Ask them to make judgements, but [do so carefully to build well-formed opinions](#).
- When students create, scaffold the tasks so [their ideas are realistic but still creative](#).

## 6. SPELLING AND VOCABULARY

Spelling lists are full of words your gifted kids already know. And “challenge words” can be annoyingly difficult. [Expand your vocabulary study](#) to include complex, but useful, words.

- Homophones: same sound, but different spellings
  - Homographs: same spelling, different meanings
  - Foreign vocabulary: commonly used words in English that come from other languages
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## 7. MATH BATTLES

Every teacher has scars from the “show your work” wars. Students know the answer, but can't explain the *how*. Try disabling their intuition by [increasing the complexity of numbers](#). Suddenly, they can't do it in their heads:

- $3x = 6$  becomes  $3x = 10$
  - $10 - 7$  becomes  $10000 - 77$
  - $1/2 = \times/8$  becomes  $2/5 = \times/8$
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## 8. GIVE CHOICE

Give students control through choice. Maybe they pick the topic they study, the product they create, or [whether they work independently or in a group](#).

- Will they write a paragraph, poem, or comic?
  - Will they investigate forests, deserts, or tundras?
  - Let them pick their favorite character to analyze.
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## 9. ONGOING, INTEREST-BASED PROJECTS

They finish early and cry, “What do I do now?” Structure a large investigation based around their passion. No requirements. No restrictions. Just a fun learning activity that might last for months.

- Understand their [intellectual overexcitability](#).
  - Try [tickling their curiosity](#)
  - Set up [curiosity Fridays](#)
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## 10. EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

Gifted kids are not academic angels or worksheet-powered robots like many think. Understand their unexpected characteristics:

- Gifted students often have [tons of physical energy](#)
  - They may be [highly sensitive](#).
  - They're often [advanced in some areas, but behind in others](#).
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## GET IN TOUCH

Have questions? Please hit me up. I'd love to hear from you.

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