

*Being Smart about Gifted Children: A Guidebook for Parents and Educators*

Review by Nancy Hutchinson for *Exceptionality Education Canada*

I found this book to be well written and very informative. The theoretical perspective is based on research conducted by Dan Keating of the University of Toronto (some with the book's co-author Dona Matthews) and other respected researchers who argue that gifted education is about providing challenging programming for students who have mastered what is being taught in the regular curriculum. I should probably admit that I have used this perspective in the writing I have done about gifted students (in the context of a textbook) and so I was probably positively predisposed to this book before opening the cover. I was not let down. The range of topics is extensive and the writing is clear. One of the central topics addresses adapting teaching to meet the needs of gifted learners in classrooms. I found the information on this topic specific and I believe both teachers and parents could read it with understanding.

I have one criticism and that is that some topics are under-referenced. For example, the section on motivation refers to many terms in the motivation literature without identifying the sources. Especially in a field like motivation, with a plethora of theories and research programs, I think that is problematic. However, I understand the challenge faced by the authors, aiming to offer a highly readable, accessible source for parents and educators that reflects recent research without being overwhelmed by citations to and descriptions of studies. Finding the middle ground here is difficult, I acknowledge, but I found some sections definitely erred on the side of light.

Overall, an outstanding resource on gifted children and gifted education. I believe it should be widely read and recommended to professionals and families. For many years, there was little research on how to meet the needs of gifted learners in classrooms. Now we have not only more research but also thoughtful compilations, like this one by Matthews and Foster, of the research in an accessible format. Hurray!