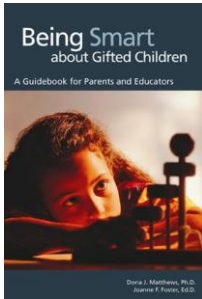


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Being Smart about Gifted Children: A Guidebook for Parents and Educators by Dona J. Matthews and Joanne F. Foster with a foreword by Rena F. Subotnik © 2005 Scottsdale, Arizona: Great Potential Press (formerly Gifted Psychology Press) 424 pp. ISBN 0-910707-66-9 (Paperback) Reviewed by Clifford Morris

Being Smarter than Others



Being Smart about Gifted Children: A Guidebook for Parents and Educators, henceforth simply ‘*Guidebook*’, provides the reader with a first-rate overview of the current state of gifted education from multiple contexts and theoretical perspectives. Authors Drs. Matthews and Foster, both experienced gifted educators, do a remarkable job creating the "best possible learning fit" (p. 189) for gifted children.

Throughout this well-written (2005) *Guidebook*, they introduce the reader to numerous lists of practical teaching strategies and proven recommendations that will indeed aid all types of educators—be they parents, psychologists, school counsellors, school administrators or current and future classroom teachers—as they seek to identify and program exceptional abilities for all types of gifted children.

Is this *Guidebook* worth reading? Absolutely yes! The authors note that there is no one gifted experience. The authors repeat over and over that there is no formula for living or working with gifted children, but there are some perspectives and understandings that can help make good and informed decisions and find ways to make a difference, so children see their world as an engaging place in which to live, laugh and learn.

Is this *Guidebook* worth having on your bookshelf? Again, a definite yes. The authors have written this reference text for parents and educators who are interested in better understanding and supporting high-level development in all types of children, not only gifted children. Based on research evidence and grounded in their own personal and professional experiences, authors Drs. Matthews and Foster weave a strong case for giftedness as a developing field of special education. Throughout, they describe the paradigm shift within the field, from a “mystery” model approach, with uncertain connections across definition, identification, and programming practices, to a “mastery” model approach that is more defensibly connected with solid educational practice.

It bears repeating what was initially stated at the outset: This *Guidebook* is must reading for classroom teachers, educational researchers, school psychologists, trainers of teachers, administrators of schools, and especially parents of gifted children. Not only does this work present the state-of-the-art research as a vital reference book on giftedness it also applies the latest theories to practice in identifying and teaching the world's most valuable, yet often neglected, natural resource, our gifted and talented children.