

Identifying High Potential Learners in Religious Studies

Summary

This advice sheet contains a checklist, originally compiled by the QCDA (Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency), of criteria to help with identifying learners who are demonstrating high learning potential in Religious Studies. It is aimed at secondary school subject teachers, as well as high learning potential lead teachers.

Below is a list of the characteristics commonly shown by learners who are demonstrating high learning potential in religious studies. A learner need not be showing all of these to be considered a high potential learner, but would most likely be demonstrating a majority of them.

Learners who show high learning potential in religious studies:

- show high levels of insight into, and discernment beyond, the obvious and ordinary
- make sense of, and draw meaning from, religious symbols, metaphors, texts and practices
- are sensitive to, or aware of, the numinous or the mystery of life, and have a feeling for how these are explored and expressed
- understand, apply and transfer ideas and concepts across topics in RS and into other religious and cultural contexts.
- have highly-developed skills of comprehension, analysis and research
- show quickness of understanding and depth of thought.

The identification of high potential learners in religious studies should be approached on the basis of distinct religious studies ability, skills, competencies and insights. The teacher's professional judgement is crucial. Religious studies teachers who know their learners and their work, and bring professional talent, expertise and awareness to the subject, are best placed to identify high potential learners. However, especially if not religious studies specialists themselves, they will probably find it helpful to talk to other teachers.

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Further Information

http://www.teachfind.com/national-strategies/teaching-able-gifted-and-talented-pupils-religious-education	Guidance on the Use of KS3 Strategy Training Materials to Support Teaching Gifted and Talented Pupils in RE.
<i>Meeting the Needs of Your Most Able Pupils in Religious Education</i> by Dilwyn Hunt	Book published by David Fulton with guidance on identification, planning, differentiation and support. Also has CD with lesson plans.
<i>REthinking! Book 17: Meeting the Needs of Able, Gifted and Talented Pupils in RE</i> by Penny Hollander	Book to support teachers of RE to meet the needs of their high ability learners.

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