

Every Kumon Child a Gifted Child

a note to Kumon parents...

Have you ever wondered whether or not your child is “gifted”? Parents of gifted children often note that, from a very early age, their child displayed characteristics that distinguished him/her from others. They may have sat up, crawled, talked, or ridden a bike earlier than their peers. They may have been able to print, color, and draw recognizable people when their peers were still scribbling. Their academic skills may have been superior or they may have been able to follow multiple-step directions at a very early age. Perhaps, early on, they were able to comprehend and repeat stories and rhymes in their correct order, or focus and concentrate for prolonged periods of time. Maybe they exhibited a witty sense of humor or leadership skills.

There was a time when the only definition of giftedness was a very narrow one in terms of a single IQ score. Fortunately, schools now recognize that many children, including those with learning disabilities, may be gifted in a wide variety of ways. The criteria for giftedness has expanded thanks to researchers such as Howard Gardner Ph.D. from Harvard University. He claimed that humans possess not one, but *eight* types of intelligence, and that giftedness can occur in any one or more of these eight areas. His eight kinds of intelligence are:



1. *Linguistic* – skilled manipulators of language
2. *Mathematical/Logical* – intuitive understanding of numbers & problem solving skills
3. *Musical* – sensitive to non-verbal sounds, pitches, rhythms, melodies and tone
4. *Spatial* – visualizes, thinks 3-dimensionally, recognizes objects when positions change
5. *Kinesthetic* – uses body to process information, often expresses it through dance, sports
6. *Intrapersonal* – introspective, admired for creative and original ideas
7. *Interpersonal* – extraverted, sensitive to needs of others, charismatic
8. *Naturalistic* - categorizes and makes connections within plant & animal kingdom

Regardless of how “gifted” is defined, maximizing each child’s potential to the fullest is the hallmark of a good gifted education program. In many ways, gifted education and Kumon share certain similarities. Both have at their core this concept of maximizing each child’s potential through an individualized program. Although the population in the schools that is identified as gifted is quite small, Kumon treats every child as if he/she were a gifted child.

Recently, a keynote speaker told a crowd of over 6,000 educators that if we expect a lot from children, they will be successful and will rise to meet our challenge; but if we expect children not to be successful, they will fail. The Kumon program is structured to ensure the success of all children. Hats off to Kumon parents, who have the vision, tenacity, and foresight to recognize that Kumon establishes individual goals and challenges for every child, and believe that their children can and will rise to meet those expectations.

Andrea Pastorok, Ph.D.

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Andrea Pastorok".

Educational Psychologist / School Consultant