

Assignment: Work with case study

- 1) Use the table from the Neihart article as last assignment
- 2) Carefully read the case study of **Devendra** and try to determine his type of giftedness. Justify your inclusion. It is recommended to use more types of giftedness, determine the share of individual types, eg by percentage (eg according to these traits, behavior can be classified as the successful 60%, these traits tend to correspond to divergently gifted 30%; according to... the features of autonomous talent). For clarity, record in a table (adjust to your liking). You can compare whether you can determine the type of giftedness better when you have got detailed information.

Name	Type - share in%	Information from case study that justify the chosen type of giftedness
Devendra		

Devendra is 7 years 5 months old, from a lowermiddle class family. Father is a taxi driver; mother is a housewife. Devendra has one younger brother, Vishesh, who also demonstrates aboveaverage cognitive development. Prenatal and postnatal history were normal. No early signs of precociousness were noticed. Devendra could talk fairly fluently by two years; parents report that he appeared to talk more than other peers. Baby talk was present, and is still present according to parents. At two years, Devendra also developed interest in books; he made his parents read books to him and teach him to read. His mother reports that she read to him from Stds. I-III textbooks and Tamil books. Due to the difficult circumstances that bothparents grew up in, they decided that they would provide the best education and opportunities for their children. Thus, despite the difficulties encountered financially in placing Devendra in various classes and activities of his interest such as Abacus, computers, Karate, Yoga, and Bhajans - parents have still ensured that he gets an opportunity to attend all these classes. They support his participation in various national and international competitions for which he is regularly selected - despite the heavy financial expenditure for which they receive no support. For example, recently Devendra's parents took out a large loan to send him to the International Abacus competition in Malaysia where he placed second. Further, living in an area with notransport connectivity or facilities such as extracurricular classes and activities, Devendra's mother takes him to the various classes located 3-5 kms away from home on a bicycle every day.

Both Devendra and Vishesh have received 'scholar badges' from their school for their high academic performance (securing 98-100 percent). Devendra has been educated in the Englishmedium. His current school is reputed for an innovative approach to education. Devendra has been performing well academically and has been scoring 98-100 percent. He always placed within the first five ranks. Both parents and teachers reported that he was interested in academics and asked relevant questions in class. He was among the few in class who were regularly able to answer all questions posed byteachers. Parents reported that Devendra also had a good memory and could recall lessons from previous years; he could also combine academic material, general knowledge, and his own experiences to answer questions. This suggests high associative thinking skills. During his free time in class,

Devendra organised a group of students and taught them academic lessons, abacus, and general knowledge. He was very popular among peers and had friends from the lower classes up to the tenth standard. Further, parents reported that he has a good sense of humour. Devendra's study habits suggest that he is meticulous, hardworking, and a quick learner. Parents reported that one or two repetitions are enough for him to learn his lessons. Once Devendra had to attend an international competition in Malaysia during his exams and returned on the morning of his exams. He had only one hour to study 15 lessons and 80 general knowledge items. Despite this, Devendra scored 85 percent on that exam. Devendra showed confidence in his academic ability and had no fear of exams. His learning strategy included hard work as well as metacognitive strategy of using feedback to improve learning. He also used effective study strategies such as rehearsal and writing out material. He organised his study material into 'chunks' and took regular breaks between 'lesson chunks.' Mother reported that after completion of a chunk, Devendra took a break of 5-10 minutes; he then returned to studying without needing to be reminded. (Using spaced learning with breaks between chunks has been identified in the psychological literature as an effective strategy for information encoding. Thus, Devendra's study methods appear to suggest metacognitive abilities.) Devendra was able to relate concepts learnt in school to real-life, which seemed to strengthen his learning. For example, having learnt about apparent motion at school, Devendra was able to explain this to his mother while travelling in the bus to explain the backward motion of the trees. Devendra also showed perfectionist tendencies when it came to academics and became upset by the loss of even one mark. He also had good language skills and was able to frequently correct his mother's grammatical mistakes in English. Parents and teachers reported that Devendra had a high concentration level and was not easily distracted by the TV or other stimuli. Mother reported that he could multitask, frequently studying with the TV or music - while doing his work accurately. At the same time he would still be able to name the song or programme that was playing. Devendra showed good logical thinking ability - he could correctly predict the climax of many films. (Having guessed the ending, it was reported that he would leave to continue with his work, since he felt it would be a waste of time to wait for the end). Another example of his logical thinking skills was reported by his father. His father said that once, after watching a TV documentary on surgery, Devendra asked him why the doctors had made only a small incision. His father replied that he did not know and asked Devendra to think about the reason. Devendra later got back to his father with the response that the small incision had probably been used to minimise patient pain and discomfort. Devendra's father also reported that he is also good at figuring out new things on his own. For example he had independently learned to use the stopwatch on the mobile phone and figured out the functions of the split timer. He taught his parents to use this instead of the clock as it was more accurate and easier to use when timing his performance on abacus. Devendra seemed to be highly achievement-oriented and expressed desire to excel in all activities. After watching a 10-year girl on TV who designed websites, he too wanted to design websites and asked his parents to enroll him in computer classes. Mother reported she herself, until she had to discontinue her education for financial reasons, was highly achievement-oriented. Devendra showed broad interests and was pursuing diverse activities. He had reached up to Level 9 (of 13 levels) in abacus. He could solve up to 100 sums involving addition and subtraction within 4½ minutes. He had attended several national and international level competitions in abacus and has won several awards at the national and international levels. His recent achievements included the 'Champion of Champions Award' at a national level abacus competition held in Bangalore in June 2010, and the second place at the International Abacus Competition in Malaysia in December 2010.

Devendra aimed to enter the Guinness Book of World Records in Abacus and was preparing for the same. His parents have been encouraging his efforts: they had obtained details regarding how to enter the competition and had been helping him prepare. Devendra was also learning karate and had reached the blue belt. His

karate teacher reported that he is physically fit and the execution of his moves was above average. His karate teacher was also preparing Devendra for several competitions at the national level where he would be competing with older children. Devendra also attended computer classes. At the computer class, teachers had repeatedly praised him for quickly grasping lessons. Mother stated that he was able to pick up in a few weeks what older students had been working on for a few months, and that the teacher praised him for this. In addition to these activities he also attended yoga classes and Bhajan classes. Devendra informed us that he wanted to become an IAS officer so that he could help the poor. His mother said that he wanted to build a large home with several quarters so that his parents and he could live in one quarter and accommodate the homeless in the other quarters. Devendra also appeared to be emotionally intelligent; he was able to understand others' emotions and act accordingly. His father reported that when Devendra sensed that he (father) is tense, Devendra would tell him to calm down, reassuring him that they have seen worse days and have overcome them; and that therefore they would also be able to handle the present. Mother reported that he also questioned other people's unjust or morally questionable acts. For example, when he saw other children littering the streets, he asked his mother why other parents don't teach their children to use the dustbin. If the child was someone he knew, Devendra would instruct them to use the dustbin. Mother reported that Devendra wanted to start a community initiative to clean up the neighbourhood. Devendra seems independent and meticulous. When left alone at home, his parents reported that he tidies the place up in their absence, without being instructed to do so. In Malaysia, his father reported that because he (father) was not fluent in English, Devendra took over the task of communication and guided his father appropriately based on the directions received from others. Devendra is also reportedly creative. He had created a picture (with a sun and flowers) using colour pencil shavings, taking care to see that the shavings did not splinter into smaller pieces. The idea for this picture was generated by him and he was also able to execute this idea independently: showing manual dexterity as well as precision. She added that despite his interest and creativity he had not been able to engage in science model-making because of lack of time and resources. (His parents could not afford materials for such experiments.) Parents report no health problems. Devendra is a healthy child and has been trained to bathe in cold water even in winter. Devendra's English, science, and maths teachers, and the principal of his school were met and interviewed. Teachers reported that Devendra was courteous and well-behaved, that his hand-writing was mature for his age, his vocabulary was advanced for his age, and that his communication skills were excellent. In class he asked many questions, completed his work quickly, could explain concepts in his own words, was a fast learner, and had good skills in observation and in drawing. He was further reported to be proactive. When teachers tell the class that which chapter would be taught in the next class, Devendra comes prepared to class, having read the chapter at home. Teachers reported that even though Devendra was frequently away from school on competitions, his work was always up to date. He was humble and did not brag about his achievements or abilities. Teachers also reported that he had good leadership qualities and takes initiative. He had an altruistic tendency and shared his notes with peers and taught them when they needed help. Devendra appears to enjoy intellectual activity. The researcher was able to build a rapport with him by offering him maths puzzles (e.g. substituting symbols for numbers and carrying out maths operations; finding, in a jumble of numbers, those that add up to a given sum; and completing a number series). Devendra completed these problems with ease and rapidity. He was also able to finish the patterndrawing exercise fairly easily (the task being to copy a pattern in entirety without lifting the pencil or going over a line). Devendra enjoyed the task and quickly grasped the concept behind the task. His work was fast, neat, and orderly, and he needed little help. He showed task perseverance, not giving up easily. He appeared to be achievement-oriented and wanted to master new things; he could handle several activities simultaneously. Emotionally, he appeared to be

calm and unassuming. Devendra appeared to be a highly achievement-oriented child with the ability to outperform his peers across domains of activities. It would be important to follow the development of his abilities and talents longitudinally, as at this stage his potentials are still unfolding and developing. Despite his socio-economic circumstances, Devendra and his parents have been able to make use of technology for gathering information and learning. Parents have been active in encouraging and supporting him. They have stretched their means to support his interests and activities. Devendra will benefit from mentoring and inputs regarding how to develop his talents further. He is dedicated and may benefit from discussions, meetings, and interactions with more knowledgeable peers. Devendra may also require some financial support. Since he is still too young for most Olympiads and scholarship competitions, at this stage it might be useful to increase his exposure and provide him with adequate stimulation to keep him engaged.